JUST THE FACTS: SPENDING AND SUTDENT ACHIEVEMENT

School Reform News

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Philanthropy Pushes School Choice Forward

Advancing reforms through direct action and by example

BY KELLY AMIS

While efforts to improve the U.S. K-12 education system via competition-based reforms are regularly thwarted in state legislatures and on Capitol Hill, independent-minded philanthropists have nevertheless found ways to advance such reforms directly.

The most prevalent example of philanthropy advancing competition-based reform—"school choice"—is seen in the private voucher movement. Over 100 private voucher programs now serve more than 75,000 low-income students, thanks to generous individuals who believe all families should have the opportunity to choose their children's schools.

John Kirtley

Many of these philanthropists grew weary of fighting for school choice reforms in legislative battles and decided to create and fund voucher programs directly.

Some—like John Kirtley of Tampa, Florida—have put their money where their mouth is by creating a private voucher program, and still devote personal time and resources toward efforts to enact legislation that would provide school choice for all low-income families.

An intense 30-something entrepreneur who has competed in triathlons around the globe—and, more recently, has battled a rare heart condition—Kirtley has made a major commitment of time and money to working with state legislators, governors, and community activists than with clients of his successful venture capital firm, Florida Capital Partners.

PHILANTHROPY continued on page 9

Voucher Use Tops 10,000 in Milwaukee

Choice schools serve 1 in 10 students—and save $50 million a year

BY GEORGE A. CLOWES

"The intellectual ice is beginning to melt. A warm wind is blowing from Milwaukee."
Jack Coons

The number of students using taxpayer-funded vouchers to attend private schools in Milwaukee topped 10,000 for the first time this year, rising 11 percent from 9,638 last year to 10,739 this year, according to enrollment figures from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.

Charter school enrollment increased to 2,192 students, while enrollment in the Milwaukee Public Schools remained essentially unchanged at 103,418 students.

Publicly funded choice schools in Milwaukee now serve more than 1 in 10 (11.1 percent) of the 116,349 students in the city who are receiving a publicly funded education. Voucher opponents were uncharacteristically quiet when the enrollment figures were announced in late October.

"Several prominent critics of the school choice movement did not respond to telephone calls or declined to comment," reported *Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel* reporter Alan J. Borsuk.

Students at Milwaukee's private Urban Day School compete for the teacher's attention. Ten years ago, Milwaukee became the first city to adopt a publicly funded school voucher program. Today, over 10,000 low-income inner-city students attend private schools with tax-funded vouchers. Photo: Candace Barbot / Miami Herald.

Saving Millions of Dollars

The impact of the choice schools is even more significant when viewed in dollar terms. While the average cost per student in the Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) for the 2001-02 school year is $9,801, charter schools receive only $6,721 per student and voucher schools receive even less, $5,553 per student.

The amount devoted to publicly funded education in Milwaukee for 2001-02 totals $1.088 billion, with $1.014 billion going to MPS students, $14.7 million going to charter school students, and $59.6 million going to voucher schools.

Although students in choice schools make up

MILWAUKEE continued on page 4

High Court Will Rule on Cleveland Vouchers

The U.S. Supreme Court announced in September it would review the constitutionality of the Cleveland voucher program. SEE PAGE 4

Tax Credits Debated at School Choice Forum

Arizona and racial history on the minds of Virginians

BY ROBERT HOLLAND

Prominent Virginians debated how much the Old Dominion State should learn from school-choice pioneers like Arizona, and from its own legacy in the civil rights revolution, during a September 20 forum at the General Assembly Building in Richmond.

Sponsored by the Lexington Institute, an Arlington-based think tank, the forum featured the state's No. 1 political proponent of school choice, Republican Delegate Jay Katzen, who was in the middle of a campaign for Lieutenant Governor. It also featured one of the state's most vocal opponents of vouchers, tuition tax credits, and charter schools, Democratic State Senator Henry L. Marsh III of Richmond.

Potential Savings

Katzen said his proposed dollar-for-dollar $500 credit for individuals and corporations donating money to scholarship assistance programs would enhance "fairness and empowerment" without draining money from the public school system.

Citing the recent success of a similar program in Arizona, Katzen speculated the Virginia credit could result in 20,440 children leaving the state's public school system—which enrolls 1.2 million. That would mean a savings of $147 million in tax expenditures and a revenue loss of $63 million. Thus, the state would realize a net savings of $84 million …and more than 20,000 needy children would receive help to attend better-performing schools of their parents' choice.

Katzen's comments came just a week after

CREDITS continued on page 16

INSIDE SRN

Interview with David E. Campbell

Can Tolerance Be Taught? Page 10

3 Americans Focus on Unity
4 GAO Reviews Voucher Studies
5 Daytonians Endorse Bold Reform
7 Small Schools Touted in New Study
9 Tools for Reformers
12 Teachers, Not Students, Well Educated
16 Bilingual Reform on the Ballot
17 Science Education a Security Risk

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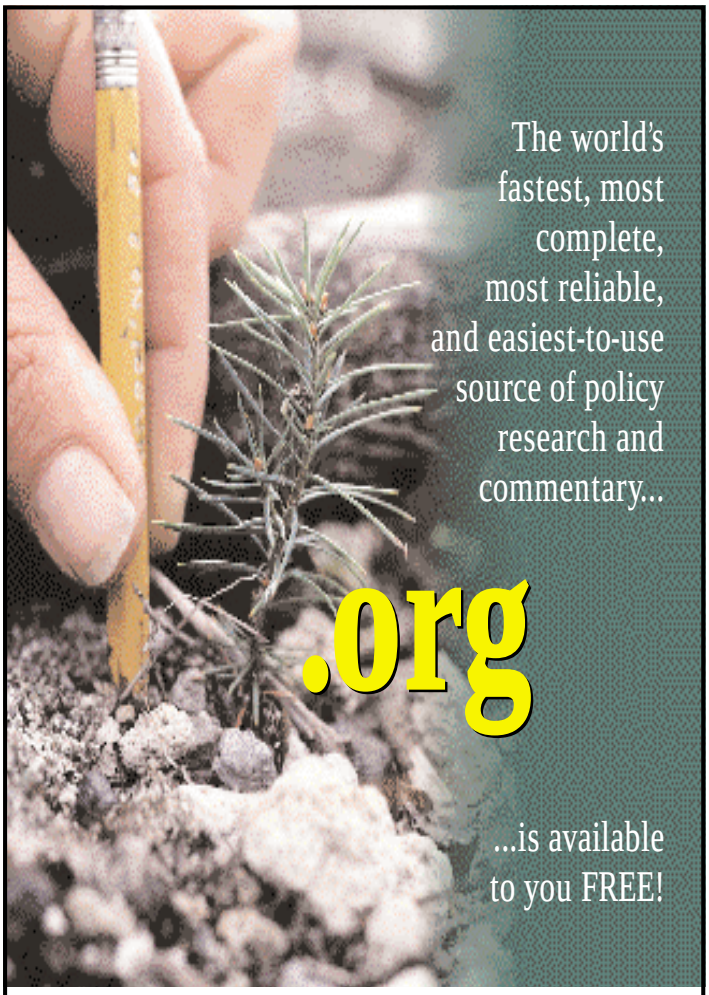
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Americans Focus on Unity after WTC Attack

BY GEORGE A. CLOWES

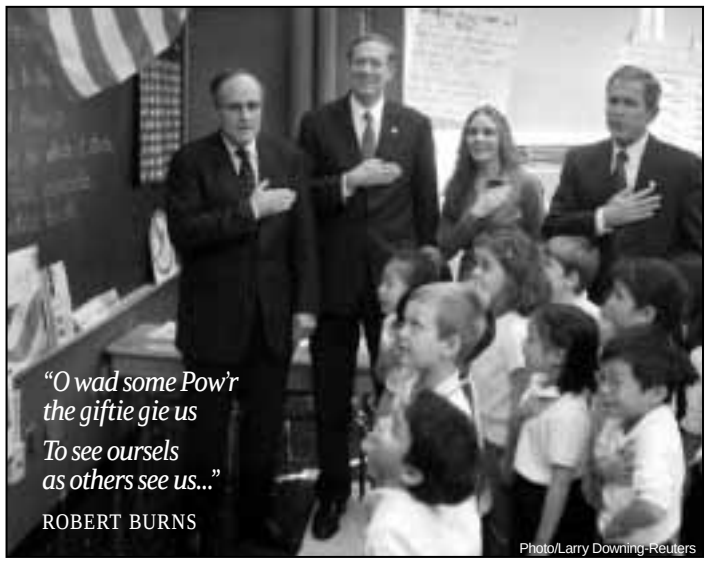
While Americans struggled to comprehend the enormity of an enemy whose perverted value system could compel terrorists to calmly plan and execute the murder of thousands of innocent people on September 11, several observers noted the attack on the Word Trade Center and Pentagon rekindled among Americans the traditional vision of their nation: many races, many ethnic groups, many religious faiths, but one nation unified by a commitment to freedom.

"The terrorists didn't see different ethnic groups, they just saw one enemy: America," said Linda Chavez, president of the Center for Equal Opportunity, speaking at The Heartland Institute's 17th anniversary benefit dinner in Chicago on October 26.

At the urging of U.S. Education Secretary Rod Paige, millions of schoolchildren across the nation joined in a simultaneous voluntary recital of the Pledge of Allegiance on October 12. The event was initiated by Paula Burton, a retired teacher, whose previous efforts for an annual "Pledge Across America" had met with only limited success.

What is remarkable about the terrorists' view of Americans as a people united by a single ideal—individual liberty—is that it is so alien to what has been taught to so many American children in the name of multiculturalism.

New York Times book critic Richard Bernstein, author of *Dictatorship of Virtue: Multiculturalism and the Battle for America's Future*, described this teaching in action at a school in Minneapolis, where American students were taught to identify themselves in terms of their hyphenated ethnic cultures of African-American, European-American, Asian-American, and so on.



New York City Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, Governor George Pataki, teacher Debra Nelson, and President George W. Bush recite the Pledge of Allegiance with school children at DeSoto Elementary School on October 3.

"There was, in other words, no American culture, no common culture at the school," explained Bernstein. "There were just separate cultures, which, upon further scrutiny, were actually divided into two cultures: the hegemonic white male culture and all the oppressed cultures."

In recent years, the U.S. had been in danger of becoming "a hyphenated nation" where the primary obligation of citizenship is to celebrate racial, ethnic, and other differences, according to a recent *Minneapolis Star-Tribune* article. But the terrorist attack on September 11 "thoroughly discredited" that notion, because Osama bin Laden did not distinguish between Americans who were black, white, yellow, brown, Christian, Jewish, or even Moslem. In his eyes, all are indistinguishable because they all are Americans.

"For while many of us did not grasp that all Americans are alike, Osama bin Laden did," wrote Katherine Kersten, a senior fellow with the Center for the American Experiment. "All of the differences of skin color and ethnic background … were nothing to him. He understood that our way of life, with freedom of conscience at its core, is a powerful threat to the absolutism he champions."

Lynne Cheney, wife of the Vice President, made a similar point in an October 6 speech in Dallas. "Our children need to know what an achievement it was to enact laws declaring that individuals could be trusted to form their own opinions."

"What unites us as Americans is more important than any of the petty divisions of race or ethnic group, of class or profession, of religious or political affiliation," said Chavez. "We are not black or white, Asian or Latino, Christian or Jew. We are Americans. Our enemies understand this. Unfortunately, it has taken their savage attack to remind us of what some have forgotten."

For more information…

WWW Pledge across America, **www.celebrationusa.org**

Richard Bernstein, "Dictatorship of Virtue: Multiculturalism in Elementary and Secondary Schools," *American Experiment Quarterly*, Summer 1998, **www.amexp.org/aeqpdf/AEQv1/AEQv1n2/AEQv1n2bernstein.pdf**

Linda Chavez, "It Took a Tragedy," Townhall.com. September 26, 2001, **www.townhall.com/columnists/lindachavez/lc20010926.shtml**

Lynne Cheney, "Teaching Our Children About America," October 5, 2001, **www.whitehouse.gov/mrscheney/news/20011005.html**

Chester E. Finn, Jr., "The Absence of Atonement: Professor William Ayers," *The Gadfly*, September 19, 2001, **www.edexcellence.net/gadfly/gadfly19.html**

Katherine Kersten, "Rediscovering Value of the Melting Pot," *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, October 17, 2001, **www.amexp.org/Publications/Archives/Kersten/kersten101701.htm**

Ex-Terrorist Teaches Ethics at Ed School

Through what Fordham Foundation President Chester E. Finn Jr. called "an exceptionally unhappy coincidence," the September 11 issue of *The New York Times* contained a feature on "unrepentant terrorist" William Ayers and his new book, *Fugitive Days*.

The book describes Ayers' life in the late 1960s and early 1970s as a leader of the Weatherman, seeking the violent overthrow of the U.S. government and planning and participating in domestic terrorist activities that killed several people. A publicity shot for the book shows Ayers with the American flag crumpled in weeds by his feet, according to *The Chicago Tribune*.

The advice Ayers offered to young people during his terrorist days was to "kill all the rich people, break up their cars and apartments, bring the revolution home, kill your parents, that's where it's at." Now, he told *The New York Times*, "I don't regret setting bombs." In fact, he added, "I feel we didn't do enough."

Ayers now presents his views to young people as a "distinguished" professor of education at the University of Illinois at Chicago, where he specializes in instructing prospective K-12 teachers in moral education and in the "ethical and political dimensions" of teaching.

In his book, Ayers rejoices, "Guilty as hell, free as a bird—it's a great country."

Fordham's Finn asks, "[W]hat does it say about this country's view of teachers and the proper preparation of those to whom we will entrust our children that a major state university confers so solemn a responsibility on such a person?"

ERRATUM

In the October issue, *School Reform News* erred in stating NAEP had provided an incorrect answer to Question #32 of the "Try This Math Quiz." Either 3.3 or 3.30 is correct for the decimal representation of 3 3/10, but 3.33 is not, since it represents 3 1/3.

School Reform News regrets this error and is ever more mindful of the advice of the managing editor's grade school teachers: Answer the question that is asked, not the one you think has been asked.

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U.S. Supreme Court Will Take On Cleveland Voucher Case

BY GEORGE A. CLOWES

On September 25, the U.S. Supreme Court agreed to review the December 2000 ruling of the Sixth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, which had found the Cleveland school voucher program unconstitutional because most of the participating schools were religiously affiliated.

In 1999, the Ohio Supreme Court had declared the program constitutional because there was no credible evidence the program's primary effect was to advance religion.

Specifically, the U.S. Supreme Court will review the following question, with a ruling on it expected by next summer:

Does a program designed to rescue economically disadvantaged children from a failing public school system by providing scholarships that they may use in private, religious or suburban public schools that choose to participate in the program—and which operates in the context of a broad array of public school choices—violate the First Amendment because in the early stages of the program most of the schools that have agreed to take on scholarship students are religiously affiliated?

No public schools have chosen to participate in the Cleveland choice program. As a result, vouchers are redeemed predominantly at religious schools, since they form a large majority of the schools that have chosen to participate. This predominance of religious schools is what troubled the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals. The state Supreme Court, on the other hand, declared, "The primary beneficiaries of the School Voucher Program are children, not sectarian schools," pointing out it was the *parents* who decided which schools received the aid, not the state.

"This is the most important educational opportunity case since *Brown v. Board of Education*," said Clint Bolick, vice president of the Institute for Justice, which has defended the Cleveland Scholarship and Tutoring Program and other school choice programs across the nation.

CLEVELAND continued on next page

MILWAUKEE continued from page 1

11.1 percent of the city's publicly funded school enrollment, they consume only 6.8 percent of the public funds allocated to educate those students.

If the choice school students were instead enrolled in MPS schools at MPS's average cost per student of $9,801, the costs would be $52.3 million higher. This $52.3 million represents real cost savings to taxpayers.

Actual savings are likely to be higher, since many voucher schools do not spend all the money that comes with the voucher student. At the end of the 1999-2000 school year, 39 of the city's 82 choice schools spent less than the voucher allocation of $4,894, returning a total of $1.2 million in taxpayer funds to the state. (See "Voucher Schools Keep Costs Low," *School Reform News*, July 2000.)

For more information…

WWW Further information on the Milwaukee voucher program—and other school choice programs—is available at a Web site maintained by the Institute for the Transformation of Learning at Milwaukee's Marquette University, **www.schoolchoiceinfo.org.**

Information on the Cleveland voucher case is available at **www.schoolchoiceinfo.org/supremecourt.**

Growing Demand

Instead of filling empty seats, choice schools in Milwaukee now face a different problem: How to add seats to accommodate the growing demand?

In October, two organizations that are longtime supporters of the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program announced plans for helping finance capacity expansions in choice schools so they can serve more low-income families.

The nonprofit Partners Advancing Values in Education said it plans to raise $40 million over the next five years to provide low-interest loans for renovation and expansion of voucher and charter schools. The Bradley Foundation, which has awarded an estimated $21 million to support school choice in the past, pledged $20 million to the loan fund.

"You've heard of a win-win strategy. This is a win-win-win-win," said Dan McKinley, PAVE's executive director. "This program helps PAVE further accomplish its mission by expanding educational opportunities for families in Milwaukee. It's good for schools, because it helps them build capacity and improve their facilities and programs. It's good for neighborhoods because greater private investment improves communities.

"Most importantly, it's good for families because their children deserve this type of investment."

School choice in Milwaukee allows low-income parents "to decide how, where, and by whom their children will be educated"—an opportunity previously reserved for the affluent—said Allen M. Taylor, chairman of the Bradley Foundation. Taylor addressed an October 9 news conference at Harrambee Community School, which will receive $1 million from the loan program to support a $5 million expansion.

Failing to Act on the Rhetoric

Critics of the voucher program have long insisted that choice students should be required to take the same tests as public school students, and that choice schools should be evaluated by an outside auditing agency.

But when school choice proponent Howard Fuller recently persuaded legislators to include such an ongoing analysis in the state budget, voucher opponents rejected the plan. The state teacher union, the Wisconsin Education Association, opposed a budget provision that would have allowed the Legislative Audit Bureau to conduct ongoing evaluations of the Milwaukee Parental Choice Program.

Democrats removed the provision from the budget bill in October.

GAO Reviews Voucher Analyses

In a report issued October 1, the General Accounting Office concluded "more definitive research" is needed to determine the effect of the Cleveland and Milwaukee voucher programs on student achievement.

But the studies of student performance reviewed by the GAO found voucher students performed as well as or better than public school students—at a cost less than the per-pupil state aid provided to the public schools. In the private sector, this would be called "higher productivity."

The GAO report also noted:

- Students attracted to vouchers were more likely to come from lower-income families than the average pubic school student;
- Well over two-thirds of the students who received vouchers in Cleveland and Milwaukee were minorities;
- In Milwaukee, voucher students were more likely to have lower levels of achievement than their public school counterparts.

Cleveland voucher students in secular and religious private schools performed slightly better than their peers in public schools, according to the fourth annual *Evaluation of the Cleveland Scholarship Program* (1998-2001) conducted by Kim K. Metcalf of the Indiana Center for Evaluation at Indiana University. Children who started as kindergartners in 1998 showed slight but "statistically significantly higher academic achievement" than those who remained in public schools. Students who remained in public schools also showed statistically significant gains that school year.

"These outstanding new results yet again proved Dr. Milton Friedman's 46-year-old hypothesis that competition lifts all boats," said Gordon St. Angelo, president and CEO of the Indianapolis-based Milton & Rose Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice. "Competition in schooling obviously works."

For more information…

WWW The August 2001 GAO report, "School Vouchers: Publicly Funded Programs in Cleveland and Milwaukee," is available from the General Accounting Office's website at **www.gao.gov**. Information on the Cleveland voucher case is available at **www.schoolchoiceinfo.org/supremecourt.**

Kim K. Metcalf's report, "Evaluation of the Cleveland Scholarship Program, 1998-2000 Summary Report," is available from The Heartland Institute's PolicyBot research service; point your Web browser to **www.heartland.org**, click on the PolicyBot link, and search for document #2184505.

Two reports issued by the Cato Insitute in September provide descriptions of two long-standing voucher programs in Vermont and Maine and are available from the Cato Web site: "Lessons from Maine: Education Vouchers for Students Since 1873," by Frank Heller, **www.cato.org/pubs/briefs/bp-066es.html** "Lessons from Vermont: 132-Year-Old Voucher Program Rebuts Critics," by Libby Sternberg, **www.cato.org/pubs/briefs/bp-067es.html.**

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CLEVELAND continued from previous page

Gordon St. Angelo, president of the Milton and Rose Friedman Foundation, agreed, saying the case "has the potential to codify in American law the right of parents to choose the best education for their children, whether public or private, religious or secular."

"We will demonstrate to the Court that this program is not about religion, it's about providing educational opportunities to children who desperately need them," Bolick promised, noting the Cleveland Public Schools satisfied only three of the state's 27 performance criteria in its most recent evaluation.

"Test results . . . revealed that 66 percent of fourth-graders in Cleveland's public schools would have had to repeat a grade if they had been forced to meet the state's new 'reading guarantee.'"

The choice program provides $2,250 scholarships to 4,000 children who may use them at participating private or suburban public schools. No suburban public schools participate in the program, but more than 50 private schools have agreed to accept the scholarships and cap their tuition for choice students at $2,500. Although this means the voucher schools educate children for about one-quarter of the per-pupil cost in the Cleveland Public Schools, the teacher unions and a majority of Democrats are strongly opposed to vouchers, saying the money is needed to improve public schools.

Cleveland parent Christine Suma dismisses that argument, saying parents feel trapped in a system that is failing their children. The problems with the public schools need to be resolved immediately, she says, and school choice gives that immediate improvement.

"We are told to stick it out and wait, because they will eventually improve. But my children and all children cannot wait," said Suma, who participates in the voucher program and is one of five Cleveland parents who petitioned the Supreme Court for review. "Their very lives cannot be put on hold until the public schools improve."

In a recent letter to *Education Week*, Cleveland Teachers Union official Michael Charney claimed voucher parents were motivated by religion to switch their children to religious schools, not by the "lousy job" the Cleveland schools were doing. In fact, he said, "Cleveland elementary schools are not performing poorly." It was a "myth" that voucher parents were fleeing poorly performing public schools, he said, because many voucher students had been enrolled "at the highest-performing magnet schools."

But test results released in September revealed that 66 percent of fourth-graders in Cleveland's public schools would have had to repeat a grade if they had been forced to meet the state's new "reading guarantee"—which the Ohio Legislature voted to abandon.

Daytonians Endorse "Bold Reform" of Public Schools

Large majority support use of government funds at any school

BY KELLY AMIS

According to a recently released public opinion survey, parents whose children attend public, private, and charter schools in Dayton, Ohio hold widely contrasting views on the quality of their children's schools. They agree, however, on a variety of education reform issues, including the use of government funds to send children to any school.

Private and charter school parents in Dayton expressed significantly more satisfaction with the academic program, discipline, safety, and teacher quality at their child's school than did public school parents. More than half of private school parents (55 percent) give their child's school an "A," as did 42 percent of charter school parents. Only 23 percent of public school parents confer an "A" grade on their child's school.

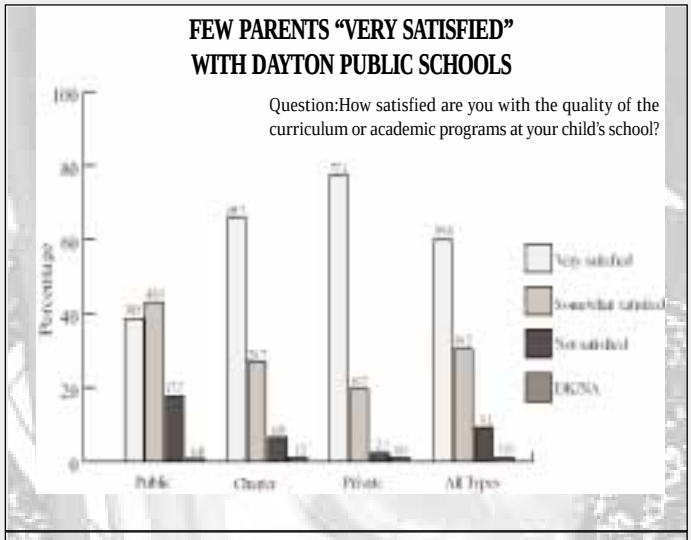
On education reform issues, by contrast, strong majorities of public, private, and charter parents—as well as non-parent residents—voiced strong support for education reforms often considered controversial, such as "the use of government funds to send children to any school, including private and church-related." A remarkable 83 percent of charter school parents and 76 percent of public school parents support publicly funded school choice, as do 68 percent of private school parents and 66 percent of non-parents.

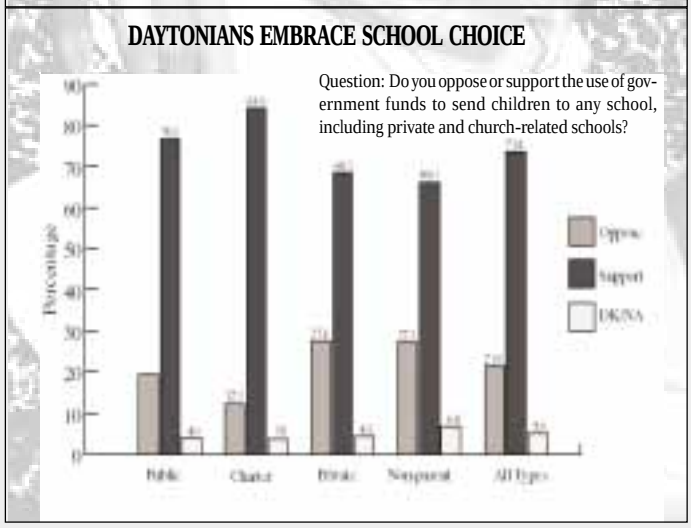
All groups also strongly support requiring suburban public schools to admit Dayton students if they have room, giving Dayton public school principals more control over teacher hiring and their school budget, and giving parents grades for involvement with their child's school.

For more information…

WWW The full report, "Dayton Education in 2001," may be examined on the Fordham Foundation Web site at **www.edexcellence.net**. Single copies may be ordered by calling 888/TBF-7474. Tell 'em *School Reform News* sent you!

When asked about the level of parental involvement in their own child's school, 76 percent of private school parents say they are "very satisfied," as do 72 percent of charter school parents. By contrast, only 43 percent of public school parents are "very satisfied" in this regard.


FEW PARENTS "VERY SATISFIED" WITH DAYTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Question: How satisfied are you with the quality of the curriculum or academic programs at your child's school?
Percentage
Public
Charter
Private
All Types


DAYTONIANS EMBRACE SCHOOL CHOICE
Question: Do you oppose or support the use of government funds to send children to any school, including private and church-related schools?
Percentage
Public
Charter
Private
Nonpublic
All Types

Similarly, when asked about their satisfaction with the quality of curriculum or academic programs in their child's school, only 38 percent of public school parents say they are "very satisfied," compared to 65 percent of charter school parents and 77 percent of private school parents.

On matters of teacher quality, Daytonians are like-minded too, supporting such reforms as:

- Making it easier for professionals from other fields to become teachers;
- Paying teachers more if their students make academic progress;
- Making it easier to fire teachers whose students do not learn enough; and
- Testing all teachers to make sure they know the subjects they are teaching—a reform over 93 percent of all those surveyed supported.

Dayton has one of the nation's fastest-growing charter school programs, now serving nearly 4,000 students—the equivalent of one-fifth of the enrollment in Dayton Public Schools (DPS). Dayton also is home to a privately funded voucher program—Parents Advancing Choice in Education—that serves approximately 1,000 low-income students.

As charter and private school enrollments have increased, DPS enrollment has fallen, from 75 percent of Dayton's K-12 students in 1997-1998 to 61 percent by 2000-2001. (See "Education Reform Produces Options for Dayton Parents," *School Reform News*, May 2001.)

More than half of all those surveyed—and about two-thirds of charter school parents—agree that the Dayton Public Schools have "gotten worse" over the last five years. The vast majority of respondents—parents and non-parents alike—would like to see seats on the Dayton School Board filled by individuals who believe DPS "needs bold reform."

The telephone survey, conducted by Paragon Opinion Research during July and August 2001, involved 1,455 respondents. It is the first public opinion survey to provide statistically significant data about the views of charter, private, and public school parents as well as non-parents in an urban, predominantly minority area, on education reform issues and school quality.

The survey was organized by the Dayton Alliance for Education and sponsored by The Thomas B. Fordham Foundation, which has its historical roots—and supports education projects—in Dayton.

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Nativity School Model Being Replicated

Jesuit idea inspires even non-sectarian version

BY WILLIAM MURRAY

A few dozen educators—backed by Catholic religious orders with hundreds of years of experience in educating youth—think they've found a key to solving the urban education conundrum: There's a strong demand for their educational program, but many parents and guardians can't afford the tuition.

Their answer: Nativity schools, which have inspired the establishment of Jesuit, Episcopalian, Salvation Army, and even a non-sectarian version.

Nativity schools charge a monthly fee of $25 to $100—if any fee at all—and support themselves through foundation grants, individual donations, and the aid of churches and the Catholic religious orders that run many of the schools. Parents and guardians usually must volunteer dozens of hours a year to chaperone field trips, do office chores and yard work, and perform other tasks.

"Eighty-nine percent of the [Nativity Mission Center] middle school's graduates complete high school, compared with 63 percent of Hispanics around the country."

Nativity network schools, started by the Jesuits in New York 30 years ago, are sprouting up around the country, with at least seven schools being opened between September 2001 and September 2002, according to Jesuit Father Jack Podsiadlo, coordinator of the Nativity education network in Baltimore. The new schools will bring the total to 41, notes Fr. William R. Campbell S.J., executive director of Boston's Nativity Preparatory School.

The schools have a low student to teacher ratio and are small schools, which makes it easier for them to give students individual attention. The focus is on the basics: reading, writing, and arithmetic.

"We want to make darn sure they get sound basics," said Tom Nolan, director of all-boys Loyola Academy in St. Louis.

Single-Sex Schools

Many of the independently run Nativity schools are single-sex middle schools. Joe Viteritti, a public policy research professor at New York University, called this feature an overlooked key to success. "It works for some people," he said of single-sex education.

"It's a way of eliminating certain distractions and focusing on the needs of one sex," Fr. Podsiadlo said of the single-sex educational model. He was principal of Nativity Mission Center from 1984 to 2001.

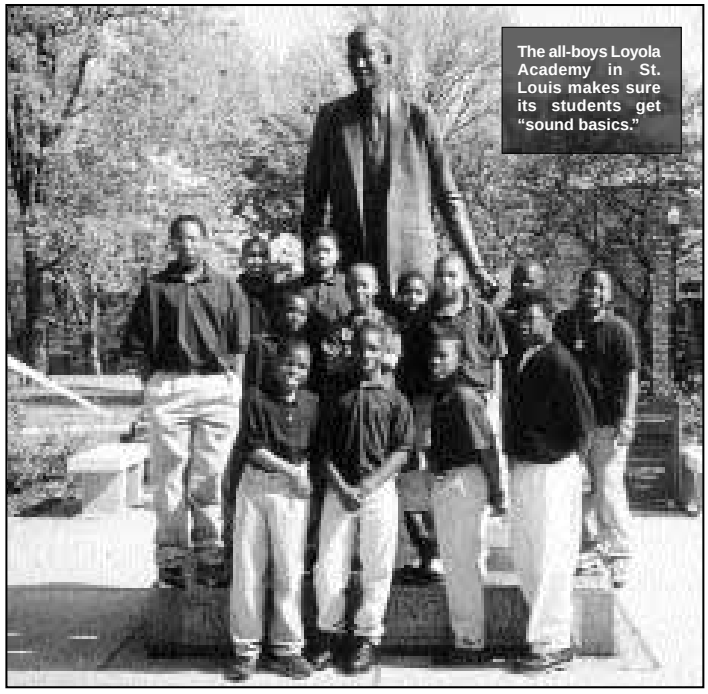
Since there are probably fewer than 2,500 children attending Nativity schools nationwide, one veteran educator called the schools "a pilot test" for urban education.

"It's a model of how education could work for the poor," said Leonard DeFiore, who holds the Br. Patrick Ellis F.S.C. chair of education at Catholic University of America in Washington, DC. "Catholic education ought to be available for everyone."

Nativity educators are sensitive to the charge they're just accepting the best and brightest children who would otherwise attend Catholic or public schools. But William Whitaker, president of Washington Jesuit Academy, points out that while they are looking for the "*potential* cream of the crop," their students are those who otherwise "might have fallen through the cracks."

Outperforming Their Peers

Open since 1971, the Jesuits' Nativity Mission Center in the lower east side of Manhattan recruits its students by making contacts at public elementary schools, Catholic parishes that don't have schools, and boys and girls clubs, said Cynthia Chovan, the development director there. Ninety-five percent of the all-boys school is Hispanic.



The all-boys Loyola Academy in St. Louis makes sure its students get "sound basics."

Compared with their Hispanic peers, Nativity Mission Center graduates do well, according to Chovan. Eighty-nine percent of the middle school's graduates complete high school, compared with 63 percent of Hispanics around the country. Whereas only 32 percent of Hispanics enter college, 75 percent of Nativity's graduates enter college, with 41 percent graduating within four years, compared to only 10 percent of their Hispanic peers, she said.

Episcopalian-run Epiphany School in Milton, Massachusetts, receives about one-quarter of its students from foster care programs, said John H. Finley IV, head of the school. Students there are admitted through a lottery system, since there are usually 10 students applying for each open slot, he said.

Like the other Nativity schools, nearly all of Epiphany's students qualify for the federal government's free or reduced price lunch program. Nativity schools usually serve two or three meals each day, and in many cases students work in afternoon study halls until 5:00 or 6:00 p.m.

"Our desire is to help lower-income children" in urban areas, Fr. Podsiadlo said. Each Nativity school tries to create a strong development program, so individual contributors, foundations, and other organizations can contribute money to sustain it, he said.

Part of a Trend

In that sense, Nativity schools are part of a broader trend among urban Catholic schools, as many look for new sources of support outside the traditional parish and diocese structures, which aren't as potent as they used to be, Fr. Podsiadlo said.

In the Archdiocese of New York, for example, each Catholic school has to have a development program to support its operations.

It takes deep pockets or wealthy friends to open a free school. In addition to spending $1.1 million on the corner lot for the Washington Jesuit Academy—scheduled to open in September 2002—the Jesuits plan to spend $600,000 between now and the school's September 2002 opening, said William Whitaker, academy president.

More than Academics

In the Jesuit tradition, the academy will try to create "men for others," who will want to serve others, Whitaker said. "Regardless of where these young men come from, they can still give back to the community, and we will let them know they're expected to do that."

Rather than "just slam dunk math down their throat," academy teachers will "think of the whole person," including each boy's body, mind, and soul, with instruction on social justice, Whitaker said.

Most Nativity schools are Catholic. Ten are run by the Jesuits, and one of the Nativity-inspired schools is non-sectarian.

Episcopalians in North Attleboro, Massachusetts are opening the doors to another school, and the Salvation Army is launching Jubilee House in Dorchester, Massachusetts. The Jesuits are launching three new Nativity schools: St. Andrew's Nativity in Portland, Oregon; Washington Jesuit Academy in Washington; and Sacred Heart Nativity School in San Jose, California.

Working with the De La Salle Christian Brothers, the Daughters of Charity welcomed their first students to DeMarillec Middle School in San Francisco in September, while attorney David Rivera launched Nativity Prep Academy in San Diego, Fr. Podsiadlo said. A lay-run Catholic school, St. Francis Academy, also started in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, and two more will likely start in Massachusetts.

William Murray is a freelance writer in Rockville, Maryland. His email address is wamurray@familink.com.

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Study Details Benefits of Smaller Schools

Yet survey finds school size is a low-priority reform for most

BY GEORGE A. CLOWES

Smaller schools can provide higher student achievement in a safer and more disciplined environment—and they can do so cost-effectively—according to a new study produced for the National Clearinghouse for Educational Facilities by the Center for School Change at the University of Minnesota's Humphrey Institute.

For more information…

WWW The 64-page September 2001 report by Joe Nathan and Karen Febey, *Smaller, Safer, Saner, Successful Schools*, is available on the Web site of the National Clearinghouse for Educational Facilities at **www.edfacilities.org**, or for $10 from NCEF at 888/552-0624. The study is also available through *PolicyBot*, The Heartland Institute's free online research service. Point your Web browser to **http://www.heartland.org**, click on the PolicyBot link, and search for document #2110412.

The NCEF site also contains a resource list of links, books, and journal articles examining research and standards for K-12 school and classroom sizes.

Further information on the Public Agenda survey, including the September 26, 2001 news release and accompanying charts and tables, is available at Public Agenda Online, **www.publicagenda.org.**

Nevertheless, a recent Public Agenda survey found that a majority of parents and teachers did not regard reducing school size as a pressing education reform, even though more than 80 percent agreed smaller schools are better at spotting troubled students.

"Families want safe, nurturing, challenging, and effective schools for their children," write the study's authors, Joe Nathan and Karen Febey of the Center for School Change. Noting that U.S. communities will spend an estimated $84 billion on school buildings over the next two years, they say "it is vital to talk about how that money is being used."

"The research we share questions the tendency over the last 20 years to build even larger schools," report Nathan and Febey, adding that "tragedies like Columbine High School showed there are problems, as well as strengths, when communities create huge schools."

In their study, *Smaller, Safer, Saner, Successful Schools*, Nathan and Febey draw on case studies of 22 public school buildings in 12 states, representing both district-run and charter public schools in urban, suburban, and rural communities. They also provide a research summary showing how educators and community members created those schools.

The study concludes that, on average, smaller schools can provide the following benefits:

- fewer discipline problems;
- greater safety for students;
- much greater satisfaction for families, teachers, and students;
- a more positive, challenging environment; and
- higher achievement and higher graduation rates.

In addition, schools that share facilities with other organizations make more efficient use of tax dollars and can offer broader learning opportunities for students, higher student achievement, and better graduation rates.

"This is not a report about educational theory," stress the authors. "It is a study about how real, existing schools can help the nation offer saner, safer, smarter, better public education."

While economies of scale frequently are used to justify the creation and operation of larger schools, Anthony Bryk of the Center for School Improvement at the University of Chicago concluded in a 1994 study that the envisioned economies of scale "are actually quite elusive" after examining the relationship between school size, cost, and quality.

"[W]hatever marginal efficiencies may be extracted is dwarfed by the overall ineffectiveness of these institutions," wrote Bryk. In fact, he added, "the reality is one of a dis-economy of scale."

Smaller Is Better

According to the Public Agenda survey, released in September, high school teachers and the parents of high school children both see a number of advantages to smaller high schools, plus some serious drawbacks to larger ones.

Large majorities of parents (80 percent) and teachers (85 percent) say smaller high schools are better at spotting troubled students. More than two-thirds (69 percent in both cases) say smaller schools also are better at spotting bad teachers.

Parents and teachers cite a number of advantages for smaller high schools, including:

- Smaller high schools offer a better sense of belonging and community (parents, 66 percent; teachers, 79 percent).
- Smaller high schools are more likely to tailor instruction to meet individual needs (parents, 76 percent; teachers, 65 percent).
- Smaller schools would be better at helping students in large urban districts (parents, 65 percent; teachers, 71 percent).
- Larger schools are more likely to have a lot of discipline problems (parents, 68 percent; teachers, 70 percent).
- Larger high schools are more likely to have students who are alienated or socially isolated (parents, 56 percent; teachers, 62 percent).

But less than one-third of the parents surveyed (32 percent) say they have given a lot of thought to the idea of reducing school size, and many teachers and parents regard other education reforms—such as smaller classes, stronger discipline, and higher teacher pay—as more pressing. Such reforms have been promoted widely in the public arena for some time, unlike the idea of smaller schools, which has largely been confined to discussion among public policy analysts and education researchers.

"People in leadership circles have been talking about reducing school size for years, but for parents especially, this is basically a new idea for improving schools," said Steve Farkas, senior vice president and director of research, Public Agenda. "They actually haven't given it that much thought."

The Public Agenda survey, which polled 801 parents with children in high school and 920 public high school teachers, was funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and is the first phase of a larger study of different aspects of school size. The Gates Foundation supports smaller high schools and has provided funding to help effective small schools replicate themselves and to help school districts redesign large high schools. Public Agenda is a nonpartisan, nonprofit research and public opinion organization.

It's Not Easy to Build a Smaller School

With research studies documenting the benefits of smaller schools; with existing large schools being broken into smaller "schools within schools"; and with no advocate for the creation of large schools, it would seem an easy matter to sell the idea of building a smaller school. Not so.

Here are recent examples of how two communities ended up with larger rather than smaller schools.

Federal Way, Oregon

Although superintendent Tom Vander Ark wanted to build a smaller, non-traditional high school for $20 million to cope with enrollment growth in the Seattle suburb of Federal Way in 1998, he found that parents, teachers, and school board members weren't sold on the idea. He was forced to go with a larger, fully equipped $43 million model. Reporter David Hill recounts Vander Ark's efforts in a recent issue of *Education Week*.

"It's extraordinarily difficult to change anything in public education," said Vander Ark, who now is executive director of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

Northwest Cook County, Illinois

When enrollment in Township High School District 214 peaked at 19,823 in the 1975-76 school year, the northwest Cook County, Illinois, district had eight high schools. As enrollment plummeted during the next 15 years to just around 10,500, the district closed two schools, selling one and retaining the other in case it was needed again in the future. The retained school is currently being used for district administration, community education, and an alternative school, and by post-secondary institutions.

Enrollment in the district now has grown to about 12,000—an average of 2,000 students per school—and it is projected to grow by another 2,000 to 3,000 students by 2006-07. According to administration officials, adding classrooms to the six existing schools would cost an estimated $57 million, while preparing the retained school for re-use would cost an estimated $20.3 million—plus an additional $8.7 million a year in added operating costs.

Although the re-opening costs were disputed by the Northwest Tax Watch, a local watchdog group, the school board voted unanimously on September 6 to increase the sizes of the district's high schools and not re-open the shuttered high school. There was no discussion of the benefits of smaller schools.

A Word to Our Readers

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Charter School Facilities & Finance

The two biggest problems in charter school development have been identified as facilities and finance. With this column, School Reform News *aims to bring its readers the newest ideas on solving these problems.*

The Benefits of Shared Facilities

BY MARK HOWARD

Identifying and negotiating for charter school facilities that already exist and are part of a business or government entity is both cost-effective and beneficial to all parties.

Locating a charter school next to or within a museum, nursery school, day care center, business park, manufacturing facility, senior citizen center, public park, or government building allows students to interact with and learn from the host facility.

Co-locating with another organization can have enormous benefits for schools, students, their families, and the broader community. There are many examples of this partnering throughout the country, and some new ideas also are appearing on the horizon.

"Co-locating with another organization can have enormous benefits for schools, students, their families, and the broader community."

Louisiana

In Amite, Louisiana, the Northwood Prep High School works with at-risk students who are either returning to school or in jeopardy of dropping out of school. The Northwood Prep student body reflects the at-risk population of the parish in which it is located, where 77 percent of students are identified as at-risk.

Northwood officials plan to move their operations from the existing location—next to a church and in portable units—to a new school that is to be built on a larger piece of property. By obtaining a large parcel, Northwood is planning to build an adjacent facility to provide foster care for many of the students in its educational program.

Creating a campus where at-risk students can both live and attend school will create an atmosphere of learning virtually guaranteed to have a positive impact on the students' lives.

New Jersey

Two years ago, Jersey City Mayor Brett Schundler opened a new shared-use facility in that community, the $8.75 million Community Education and Recreation Center.

During the day, the facility serves as the leased home of the Golden Door Charter School, which serves largely at-risk students. During non-school hours, the facility is open for recreation to all members of the Jersey City community. The school's lease payments go to pay off the cost of the building. (See "The Face of Education Reform," *School Reform News*, February 2000.)

Minnesota

Another major benefit of co-location is the expanded learning opportunities for students.

For example, students at the Minnesota School of Environmental Science find it easy to participate in internships in environmental science, to study animals, and to help prepare exhibits because their school shares space with the Minnesota Zoo.

When a school shares space with a higher education institution, a museum, or a zoo, students can take college courses or get valuable hands-on experience.

Malls or Parks

Similarly, locating a charter school in a mall becomes a win-win situation for both the mall owners and the school. When a school is located adjacent to ongoing businesses, students often are able to participate in a variety of hands-on cooperative projects with the business owners. Examples of such projects are tracking customers, analyzing sales, comparing marketing strategies, examining how different merchants attract people into their stores, and how they service their new customers.

Of course, students, teachers, and parents also will frequent the mall and its stores because of the school's location, and the mall ownership will receive rent from a retail space that might otherwise not be leased.

Identifying parcels of property that are government-owned may be an inexpensive way to create a charter school campus. Many publicly owned parcels can be leased from the government entity that owns the property. This will lower the cost of land, which in turn allows larger parcels to be considered. Leasing a portion of a park that may already have baseball, football, or soccer fields, a running track, or other amenities reduces costs and allows more dollars to be spent in the classroom.

Thinking creatively and looking for opportunities to share facilities can pay dividends for everyone involved.

Mark Howard has specialized in the development of commercial properties since 1980. He owns and operates M.H. Realty Associates, Inc. in Tamarac, Florida. Readers with questions on facilities and finances are encouraged to contact him directly at mgfl@aol.com. The most frequent questions about common problems will be included in future columns.

Charter School Update

A total of 2,372 charter schools, serving more than 576,000 students, were in operation at the start of the 2001-02 school year, according to the Center for Education Reform. The continuing growth reflects the success of models like National Heritage Academies; the slowing of that growth over the last few years reflects government-mandated caps on expansion and school board animosity to competition.

Charter Management Company Makes *Inc.* List

National Heritage Academies, Inc. (NHA), a Michigan-based national charter school management company serving almost 14,000 students, has been named one of America's entrepreneurial growth leaders by *Inc.* magazine in its annual 500 list of the nation's fastest-growing private companies.

Ranked #19 in its first appearance in the *Inc.* list, the Grand Rapids-based NHA opened its first school in 1996 and has since opened 27 additional schools in Michigan, North Carolina, and New York. An independent survey indicated that over 90 percent of all NHA parents say NHA delivers on its promise of academic excellence and are satisfied with the education their children are receiving.

Pennsylvania School Boards May Face Suit

The 3,000-student Einstein Academy Charter School (TEACH), one of the largest online K-12 schools in the U.S., is planning to file a class action lawsuit against more than 300 Pennsylvania school boards for withholding $5 million in per-pupil allocations from the school since July.

The Western Pennsylvania Cyber Charter School had a similar experience last year, when some 50 districts balked at paying money to the charter school. The state Department of Education threatened to withhold almost $1 million in other funds from the non-paying districts. (See "Defending Cyber Schools and Homeschooling," *School Reform News*, July 2001.)

"The offending administrators have been told again and again, even by the State Secretary of Education, that they are required by law to send the legislated funding directly to The Einstein Academy, and yet they intentionally and defiantly refuse to do so," said Robert Crowe, president of The Einstein Academy Parent Teachers Organization.

Critics Decry Creative Solution to Michigan Cap

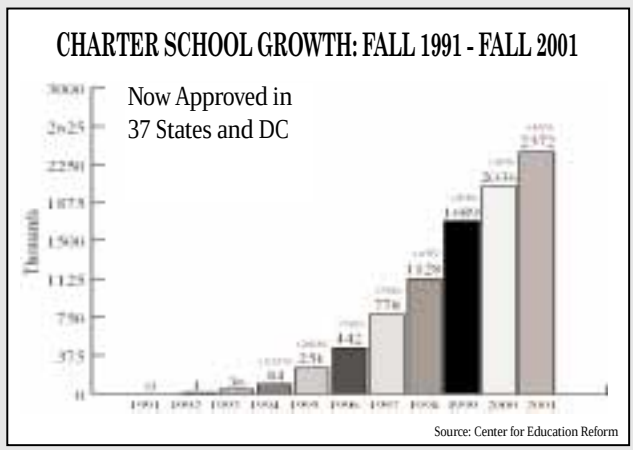
Although community colleges in Michigan have run up against a state cap on the number of charter schools they may open in their local service area, Bay Mills Community College, a Native American school with a statewide service area, has partnered with Ferris State University to start new charters throughout Michigan, thus circumventing the cap.

Critics don't like the innovative solution and argue that chartering power should be restricted to a limited local area. But Dan Quisenberry, executive director of the Michigan Association of Public School Academies, points out that Bay Mills is responding "to all the demand that's out there."

Victory in Missouri

Charter Consultants reports that the Imhotep Charter Academy, Inc. and the Missouri State Board of Education reached an out-of-court settlement on October 26 regarding Imhotep's lawsuit against the state Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) for denying Imhotep's charter school proposal. Only the State Board of Education has the authority to deny a charter application.

The settlement came just one business day before the trial was scheduled to start, and just one day after the state suffered a defeat in its attempt to block the lawsuit from going to trial. DESE agreed to assist Imhotep in preparing its application and to forward it to the state Board of Education.



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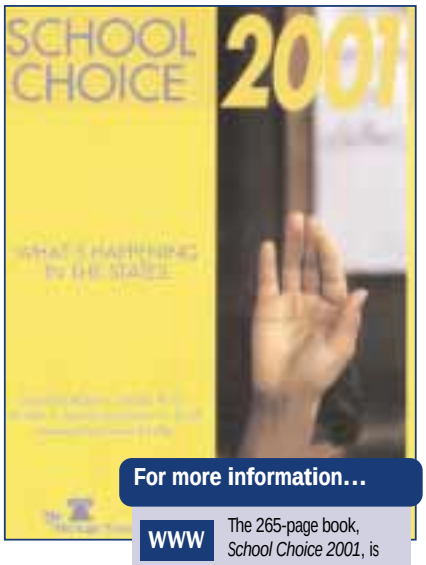
TOOLS FOR REFORMERS

School Choice Reference Guide Updated



The Heritage Foundation has updated its annual report on school choice across the United States, *School Choice 2001: What's Happening in the States*. The online version provides links to state report cards on school performance and updates on legislative activity.

The book is an invaluable reference guide for parents, educators, researchers, school choice advocates, policymakers, and journalists. Every education writer should have a copy on his or her bookshelf.

School Choice 2001 contains data on enrollment, staffing, test scores, costs, and school choice laws for K-12 education in all 50 states, Washington, DC, and the U.S. territories of Puerto Rico and the Mariana Islands. It also provides background material for each state on recent developments in school choice, together with contact information for local policy organizations and school choice groups. Contact information also is provided for national organizations.

Heritage education expert Jennifer Garrett also provides a national perspective on school choice, blending the state-level advances with recent court rulings and research related to school choice. For example, she points out that at least 31 state legislatures this year considered tax credits or deductions for education expenses or contributions to scholarship programs for low-income students. That's up from 18 in 2000, Garrett writes. The number of students in charter schools also is up, doubling over the past two years.

"School choice is gaining more allies from Main Street to Pennsylvania Avenue," Garrett notes. "As the number of legislative proposals before Congress and the state legislatures indicates, support for school choice will only increase until adequate reforms to the current system allow all children to attend schools that actually teach."

For more information…

WWW The 265-page book, *School Choice 2001*, is available on The Heritage Foundation's Web site at **www.heritage.org/schools.** A hard copy is available from

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Washington, DC 20002-4999
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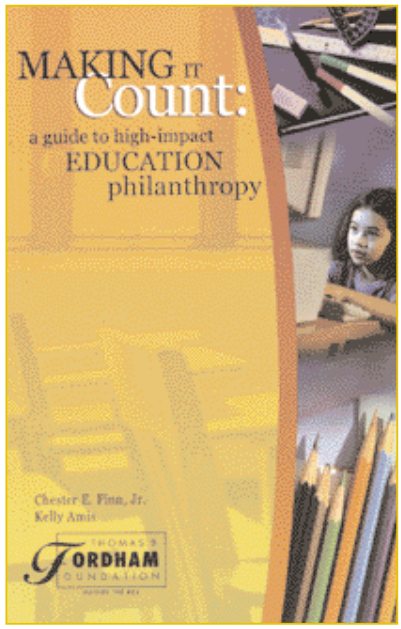
School Choice 2001 also finds:

- Almost 100 privately funded scholarship programs allowed more than 50,000 students to attend the schools of their choice during the 1999-2000 school year;
- Taxpayer-supported choice programs in Florida, Maine, Ohio, Vermont, and Wisconsin benefitted another 12,000 students;
- Parents homeschooled almost 2 million children in grades K-12 during the 2000-2001 school year—about 3 percent of the school-aged population in the U.S.

High-Impact Education Philanthropy



Billions of dollars in private donations have been directed towards education reform in the U.S., but they have produced little in the way of lasting change, according to a new report from The Thomas B. Fordham Foundation.

However, the report suggests philanthropists can strengthen their impact on the K-12 education system by focusing on "transformational" reforms that promote competition and high academic standards.

"The level of philanthropic giving in the U.S. is at an all-time high, as is the public's concern with the quality and performance of our schools," said Chester E. Finn Jr., president of the Foundation. "Yet gridlock and interest group politics block government from solving America's pressing education problems. Philanthropists can do much in this domain—but they'll only be effective if they're smart and determined."

Making it Count: A Guide to High-Impact Education Philanthropy provides examples of privately funded education reforms that are making a difference—to children right now and, over time, to the educational system itself. The primary author of the guide is Kelly Amis, Fordham's program director.

"We wanted to show how philanthropic dollars can be targeted to provide more and better educational opportunities immediately to the children who need them most, while also effectively leveraging a long-term transformation of our K-12 delivery system," said Amis.

To help philanthropists direct their dollars to efforts that will create lasting improvements, the guide covers the following:

- The major theories of change embraced by today's education reformers and philanthropists—and why some work better than others;
- What's working and what isn't working in policy-driven reform—and why private intervention is needed; and
- Profiles of a dozen philanthropists active in education reform, with details of their particular projects.

The new guide, plus a new education philanthropy Web page, can be found at www.edexcellence.net/philanthropy. The Web page also features seven new studies commissioned by The Fordham Foundation and written by experts in education reform and philanthropy.

PHILANTHROPY continued from page 1

He helped push the Florida legislature to pass the first statewide publicly funded voucher program—which provides vouchers to students who attend failing public schools—as well as a corporate tax credit for businesses that provide funds to scholarship programs for low-income students. Recently, he single-handedly raised several million dollars from other Florida business leaders to expand the supply of private school seats for low-income voucher beneficiaries.

"Some business men and women put on blinders when they think of education," notes Kirtley. "They operate in free market business environments and would be up in arms if *that* were threatened, but they don't question why we have an essentially socialist delivery system for K-12 education.

"When I see the waste that results from this system, and more important the injustices to poor children, it burns my blood."

Jack and Isabelle McVaugh

Several states to the west, Arizonans Jack and Isabelle McVaugh have also felt compelled to fight for better educational options for needy students. They have personally supplied vouchers to low-income children through charitable contributions, and have successfully lobbied Arizona state policymakers to allow others to do the same via tuition tax credit legislation.

After retiring to Arizona in 1992, the McVaughs heard about the philanthropic work of Indiana's J. Patrick Rooney, who launched the first privately funded voucher program in 1991. With the help of State Senator Tom Patterson, the McVaughs started their own program for low-income families in Maricopa County, called the Arizona School Choice Trust (ASCT).

Soon after, working hand-in-hand with Patterson, they pushed other state legislators to support a tuition tax credit bill. While the McVaughs were not lobbyists per se, they were able to talk credibly about the high demand for tuition assistance they had encountered in the low-income community and the way scholarship organizations like theirs operated.

Arizona's innovative tax credit program was enacted in 1997, allowing state taxpayers to claim dollar-for-dollar tax credits on donations to private voucher programs like ASCT. The ASCT served 100 students in 1998-1999, but by 2000-2001 it served more than 700 students, thanks to new donations inspired by the tax credit.

All told, the Arizona tuition tax credit has funneled over $32 million into organizations that have provided over 19,000 vouchers since 1997.

Philanthropists like Kirtley and the McVaughs provide welcome support to the school choice movement. Their resources, uncontrollable by political interests, provide proof of the promise of school choice reforms, while their community ties and standing give them access to policymakers that low-income families often do not have.

Kelly Amis is program director for The Thomas B. Fordham Foundation in Washington, DC and a co-author of Making it Count: A Guide to High-Impact Education Philanthropy. *Her email address is KLAmis@aol.com.*

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Can Tolerance Be Taught?

An interview with David Campbell
by George A. Clowes

Since the rationale for establishing the common schools was to instill American values, it's entirely appropriate to ask: How well are the public schools achieving that aim? That question in turn leads to a flood of others:

- How well do our K-12 schools educate students for living in a constitutional republic?
- What do our schools teach about the unique freedoms of expression and inquiry that are fundamental to our Western civilization—and not to others?
- How do different types of schools educate students in terms of tolerance and the democratic values essential to the functioning of our republic?

These are not new questions for Harvard University education researcher David E. Campbell, who is currently a visiting fellow at the Center of Democratic Politics at Princeton University and a Ph.D. candidate in political science at Harvard.

He developed an interest in the civic component of K-12 education during his undergraduate work in political science at Brigham Young University. Before graduating with a B.A. in 1996, he wrote an honors thesis on how people learn about politics.

In pursuing graduate studies at Harvard University, Campbell became a research associate in the Program on Education Policy and Governance, where he worked with Paul Peterson, William Howell, and Patrick Wolf on a series of ground-breaking analyses of the effects of school vouchers. A class of Peterson's further stimulated Campbell's interest in the question of how different types of schools deliver civic education, which Campbell saw as a relatively neglected but vitally important area of research.

Campbell has presented his work at a number of professional conferences; is coauthor of several of the school voucher studies from Harvard's PEPG program; has written numerous articles, reports, and book chapters on education research; and is the recipient of several awards. He recently spoke with *School Reform News* Managing Editor George Clowes.

CLOWES: *Opponents of school choice assert public schools are the only institutions that can educate citizens for living in a democracy. Could you address that claim?*

CAMPBELL: That claim is tied up in the history of why it is we have public or common schools in America. One of their initial justifications was that we needed to take people who were new to America's shores, or at least their children, and teach them American mores and American citizenship.

Ironically, many of the things that were being taught at that time had religious overtones—Protestant overtones—which prompted many Catholics to send their children to Catholic schools. Today, most people don't expect their public schools to spout any kind of religious belief, but there still is this idea that it is a melting pot, the common school where we bring people together.

Of course, the question is whether that's actually true. Is it true that public schools do a better job at all of those things we think constitute good citizenship than do private schools?

My research suggests that, for the most part, private schools—and in particular, Catholic schools—do a little better job than public schools. The fact they don't do any worse is perhaps what's most surprising to those who believe the public schools are the only place where good citizenship can be taught.

A lot of the charges that are thrown around regarding public versus private schools are really about what we think those terms mean.

When we use the term "public" to refer to a school in the United States, it implies anybody can attend that school. For the most part, that's not true. It's "public" in the sense the funds for it come from tax revenues, but almost every public school in America draws its school body from a fairly narrow geographic area.

"When we use the term 'public' to refer to a school in the United States, it implies anybody can attend that school. For the most part, that's not true."

That means that, in exclusive suburbs, the "public" schools are just as private as any "private" school. To attend them, you have to own a home in that area . . . and that can be an expensive proposition.

On the other side, many schools referred to as "private" have no particular geographic jurisdiction. Many parochial schools don't even have a requirement that you be a member of their particular faith to attend. Obviously, you need to agree to adhere to the rules of the school, which are tied up with its religious mission, but, in many cases, these "private" schools are not selecting people simply on the basis on their religious beliefs. And in many cases, the tuition is quite low.

If what you're really concerned about is putting students in an environment where they're confronted with people with different ideas and different backgrounds and all that, it's not clear your typical suburban public school accomplishes that. Or, if it does, I'm not sure it does so any better than the private school model, which has people from a much wider geographic area choosing to attend that school—perhaps because of their religious beliefs, perhaps because of the academic flavor of the school, or perhaps because of the discipline.

CLOWES: *Using the terminology of voucher critics, do children who attend these non-public schools turn out to be more racist, separatist, or segregationist than those who attend public schools?*

"Above all things I hope the education of the common people will be attended to; convinced that on their good sense we may rely with the most security for the preservation of a due degree of liberty."
Thomas Jefferson to James Madison, 1787

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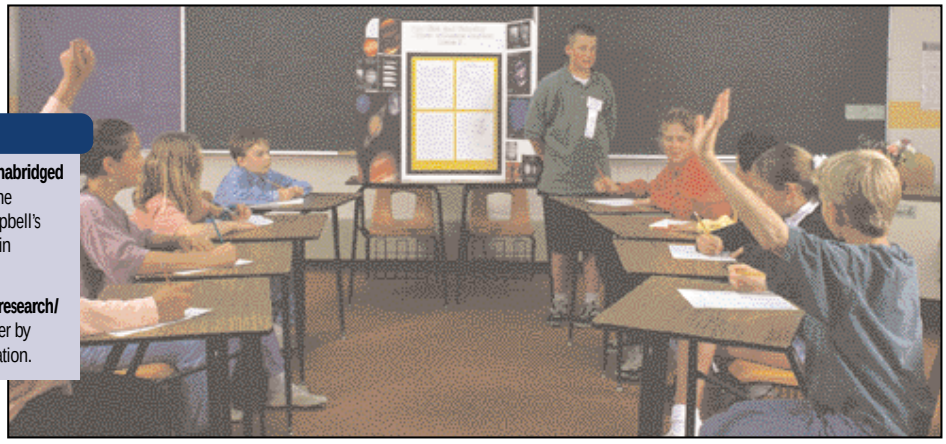

For more information...

WWW The following Web sites have further information on David Campbell's work and on civic education:

www.civiced.org —an organization dedicated to civic education

www.educationnext.org/unabridged/20013/campbell.html —the unabridged version of Campbell's paper, "Bowling Together," in *Education Next*.

www.pioneerinstitute.org/research/whitepapers —offers a paper by Campbell on civic participation.

CAMPBELL: I think that is totally off base. In the data I've used, from a 1996 U.S. Department of Education survey, there are a variety of questions relating to various components of civic education, including whether or not students have learned the skills necessary to be involved in their communities.

That is something political scientists are particularly concerned about—whether people have skills such as being able to write a letter, give a speech, participate in debates, and so on. The survey also has questions on how much people know about the political process, as well as some questions about "political tolerance," which would be a respect for the civil liberties protected by the First Amendment.

These questions are typically structured to name a specific unpopular group with an unpopular point of view—for example, a group that's against churches and religion, or one that wants to legalize drugs. People then are asked questions like, "Do you think such persons should be allowed to live in your neighborhood?" "Should they be allowed to write a book that would be in your library?" "Should they be allowed to speak publicly?" and "Should they be allowed to run for President?"

"In exclusive suburbs, the 'public' schools are just as private as any 'private' school."

What we find, after accounting for every possible confounding factor, is that, for the most part, students in private schools score higher on political tolerance than students in public schools. That's true particularly in Catholic schools, but it's also true in private secular schools.

The one exception to that is students who are in religious schools that are not Catholic, which is a bit of a clumsy category because there are lots of different types of schools there. But, unfortunately, that's as far as the data let me break it out.

In the voucher research I've done with Paul Peterson, William Howell, and Patrick Wolf, we found that sometimes there seems to be an effect on political tolerance after a year or two. But in a study Peterson and I have done nationally, we've actually just found that, after one year in a voucher program, students in grades 6, 7, and 8 score higher on a political tolerance measure than students in public schools. And that's all private schools together.

So, the evidence seems to be building that private schools do at least as well, and probably a little better, at teaching political tolerance than public schools.

There is a likely reason for is. Other research has shown that this idea of political tolerance is related to cognitive performance. The more you learn about all sorts of things, the more you begin to appreciate this element of our Constitutional protections.

So if schools are doing a better job of teaching civics or social studies, then we might expect students to have a better appreciation of this one component of civic education.

CLOWES: *So what you're saying is that political tolerance is related to cognitive performance.*

CAMPBELL: Yes, and other research has shown that, too.

This idea of political tolerance has been around for a long time, and there's been a fair amount of research on the question of what is it that leads people to be, as one author puts it, "democratically enlightened."

We've long known that the blunt measure of how much education you have is a really strong predictor of how politically tolerant you are. One prominent political scientist has argued quite convincingly that what makes you politically tolerant is this cognitive performance—this idea that you've learned a lot about how our Constitutional protections work. And it's probably what drives other elements of political involvement, too.

Among philosophers, and even the Founders themselves, there's a common theme that in order for democracy to function, there needs to be a common base of knowledge, and we've also found empirically that's true. People who are more aware of what's going on, people who just simply know more about American politics, or politics in general, are just better citizens on almost every measure.

This idea of political tolerance is something many academics, many political scientists, consider to be important. There are other reasons to think it's perhaps not the most important element in a democratic society.

I think these other components of civic education are important as well. There's probably a point at which we become too tolerant. Maybe not on the specific question of the First Amendment, but more broadly when we need to stand up and say one thing is right and another thing is wrong.

Sometimes I fear we've veered too far in the direction of honoring tolerance above all when there are other values that are probably just as important. For example, I would hope schools are teaching judgement as well as fostering tolerance. Admittedly, it's a tricky thing to navigate.

CLOWES: *Could the students who go to Catholic schools in general be predisposed to be good citizens because they come from families that are civic-minded?*

CAMPBELL: That's *the* question anybody doing this sort of research has to grapple with.

I should begin by saying that the null hypothesis—the conventional wisdom, the general expectation—would probably be that people who attend a private school would be less tolerant because of the image of private schools as being insular and exclusive.

Using data from the U.S. Department of Education, I'm able to account for essentially every possible confounding factor, but that still leaves the possibility there's something we haven't accounted for. And that's where our randomized field trial comes in, using data collected nationally from the Children's Scholarship Fund.

When you do a randomized field trial, you can be sure the results are being driven by switching from a public to a private school, because you have a legitimate control group. It's randomized, which means the only thing that determines whether you get a voucher or not is whether or not you win the lottery. All of the people in the study have applied for a voucher. Some get vouchers, some don't.

In this particular study, we weren't subjecting the students to a standardized test. Instead, we were asking public opinion survey questions, like the ones about political tolerance.

CLOWES: *And you found that after grades 6, 7, and 8, the students who received vouchers to go to private schools had a higher level of political tolerance than the students who didn't get vouchers and stayed in public schools?*

CAMPBELL: That's right. It makes sense to look at the older grades because that's where students start learning about the political process. It doesn't make a lot of sense to ask a fourth-grader about civil liberties, but when they get up into the late elementary, early junior high years, that's when those ideas start coming together in their minds.

CLOWES: *What do you see as the major priorities for school choice research over the next few years?*

CAMPBELL: In the short term, Paul Peterson and the others and I are continuing to look at who's interested in school choice.

Terry Moe has just written a book that looks at this in the hypothetical case, asking people in a telephone survey, "If there were a nationwide voucher program, do you think you'd be interested in putting your child in a different school?" What we can do with the Children's Scholarship Fund data is find out who's *actually* interested.

"How much education you have is a really strong predictor of how politically tolerant you are."

We have extensive survey data from the families who applied for the Children's Scholarship Fund. We also administered the survey to a random sample of the United States population who in theory would be eligible for the Children's Scholarship Fund but didn't apply for it. These are families with incomes falling within the required range and with children of the appropriate age. What are the differences between these two groups? Why is one group interested and the other not?

We've written one paper on this and we're continuing to explore it. We're finding some interesting things.

For example, we haven't seen any substantial educational differences between parents who apply and parents who don't. It's not demographics that leads people to apply—it's dissatisfaction with the child's public school. That finding addresses the fear that a voucher program would cream the best students and take the most motivated parents out of the public schools. We haven't found that.

On the broader question of where I think school research should go: One thing we need to know more about is why some schools do better than others, on test scores, or discipline, or civic education. We haven't done a good job of determining that. There's no reason why we can't do it, and we ought to. I think that's the next big step that has to be taken.

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Teacher Education Levels Have Increased, But Student Achievement Has Not

BY HANNA SKANDERA AND RICHARD SOUSA

Debate surrounds the preparation and qualifications that characterize high-quality teachers. Compared to other fields, disputes and ambiguities regarding the knowledge base and competency level required of teaching professionals are particularly striking.

Many agree that teachers should possess strong basic knowledge of the subjects they teach, but does that knowledge translate into effective teaching? Over time, teachers' education levels have increased—but the anticipated increase in student achievement has not followed.

Degrees and Majors

The type of degree held is one measure used to determine teacher qualifications.

In the 1960s, the percentage of teachers with advanced degrees began to increase. Today, the majority of public school teachers (54.5 percent in 1996) have advanced degrees.

Heightened awareness of teacher education levels has been accompanied by an increasing awareness of teachers' majors. School administrators, particularly those hiring secondary school teachers, are looking for candidates with an academic major—English, math, or history, for example—rather than a major in education. To date, however, there has been little increase in the number of teachers holding academic majors.

Considering all primary subjects, fully one-third of public school teachers (nearly 34 percent) in grades 7 through 12 are teaching without a major, or even a minor, in the academic field in which they are teaching. Forty-one percent of U.S. eighth-grade math students learn math from a teacher who has not majored in that subject. By contrast, 71 percent of eighth-grade math students outside the United States learned math from teachers who majored in mathematics in college.

The more technical the subject, the less likely it is for the U.S. teacher to have advanced preparation in that field. According to Richard Ingersoll's 1999 report in *Educational Researcher:*

- One-fifth of all public school students in English classes in grades 7-12 were taught by teachers who did not have even a minor in English, literature, communications, speech, journalism, English education, or reading education.
- About one-quarter of all public school students in mathematics classes in grades 7-12 were taught by teachers without a major or minor in mathematics or mathematics education.
- Thirty-nine percent of all public school students in life science or biology classes in grades 7-12 were taught by teachers without a minor in biology or life science.
- Fifty-six percent of all public school students in physical science classes in grades 7-12 were taught by teachers without a minor in physics, chemistry, geology, or earth science.
- Over half of all public school students in history or world civilization classes in grades 7-12 were taught by teachers who did not have a minor in history.

Effect on Student Achievement

Teacher education as we know it is not the sole solution to an improved education system. Whereas teacher education levels have increased over the past 30 years, at least in terms of formal education, student achievement during that period has remained flat on a national level and fallen in international comparisons.

For example, U.S. students' performance declined in comparison to other nations when the same students were tested in fourth- and then again in eighth-grade, according to the Third International Math and Science Study-Repeat, a same-cohort/value-added study that provides up-to-date international comparisons.

Examining recent data gives rise to two questions:

- Teachers are spending more time increasing their academic training, but are they becoming better teachers or merely more highly credentialed?
- Should we place an even greater emphasis on teachers obtaining an academic major rather than a major in education?

Admittedly, improved student achievement cannot be realized only by answering those questions. But teachers play a critical role in the education system, and finding ways to make them as effective as they can possibly be must surely be a key element of any education reform plan.

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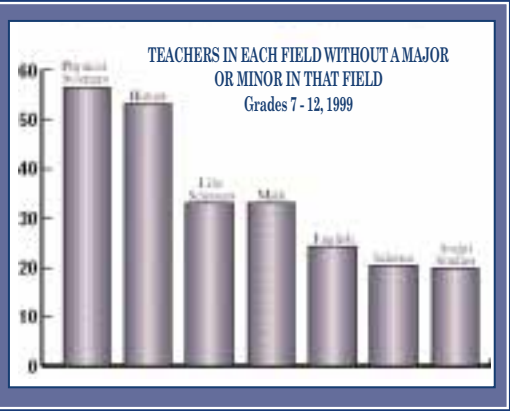
Percentage of Teachers by Highest Degree Obtained, 1993-94

Highest degree held (percent)	Total Private	Total Public
Less than bachelor's	6.7%	0.7%
Bachelor's	59.0%	52.0%
Master's	29.8%	42.0%
Education professor	2.9%	4.6%
Doctor's	1.7%	0.7%

Note: Excludes prekindergarten teachers.

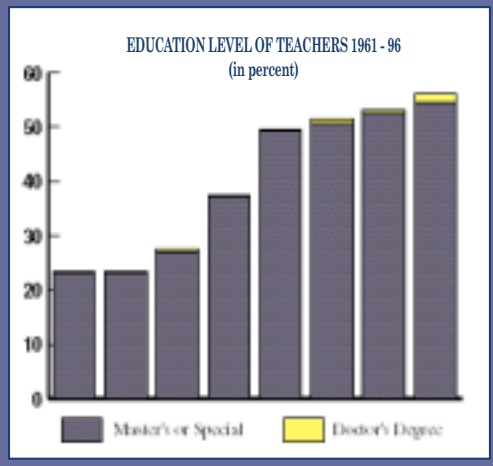


Teacher Education in Percent, 1961-1996

Highest degree held	1961	1966	1971	1976	1981	1986	1991	1996
Less than bachelor's degree	14.6%	7.0%	2.9%	0.9%	0.4%	0.3%	0.6%	0.3%
Bachelor's degree	61.9%	69.9%	69.6%	61.6%	50.1%	48.3%	46.3%	43.6%
Master's or specialist degree	23.1%	23.2%	27.1%	37.1%	49.3%	50.7%	52.6%	54.5%
Doctor's degree	0.4%	0.1%	0.4%	0.4%	0.3%	0.7%	0.5%	1.7%
Memo Master's + Spec + Doc	23.5%	23.3%	27.5%	37.5%	49.6%	51.4%	53.1%	56.2%

Note: Data are based on sample surveys of public schoolteachers. Because of rounding, percents may not add to 100. Education Specialist is defined as teachers who have had six years of college.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Digest of Education Statistics, 1999, NCES 2000-031, by Thomas D. Snyder. Production Manager, Charlene M. Hoffman. Washington, DC: 2000.



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Education Industry News

A sampling of education industry news from The Education Economy, *a weekly publication of the market research firm Eduventures.com, which conducts research on the pre-K-12, post-secondary, corporate training, and consumer markets worldwide. This copyrighted material is used by permission of Eduventures.com, Inc.*

Arizona Awards IT Deal to Cox

CNN.com reported on August 30 that the **Arizona School Facilities Board** awarded $172 million in school IT infrastructure contracts to **Cox Business Solutions**, an application service provider. Cox will deliver more than 7,000 educational software products and productivity applications to the more than 850,000 students, teachers, and administrators in all 1,200 of Arizona's schools.

Goodbye LearningStar, Hello Excelligence

LearningStar Corp., a developer, manufacturer, and retailer of educational products to the pre-K-12 market, announced on October 10 it will change its name to **Excelligence Learning Corporation** to avoid potential confusion with **LearnStar L.P.**, a Dallas, Texas-based company that develops and markets interactive educational technology to the pre-K-12 market.

Harcourt Acquires Classroom Connect . . .

On August 28, **Classroom Connect Inc.**, a provider of professional and classroom learning resources for the K-12 market, announced it will be acquired by **Harcourt Education Inc.**, a subsidiary of **Reed Elsevier** that publishes K-12 educational materials. Classroom Connect will continue to operate as an independent division within the Harcourt Education group.

. . . And Inks Alliance with Riverdeep

On October 12, **Reed Elsevier's Harcourt Education Group** announced a strategic alliance with **Riverdeep Group plc**, a publisher of K-12 interactive learning products, to co-develop e-Basal interactive digital instructional content for distribution by Harcourt. As part of the agreement, Reed Elsevier made an equity investment of $25 million in Riverdeep. Tony Lucki, CEO of Harcourt Education Group, will join Riverdeep's board of directors.

"Three out of four teens (73 percent) have access to the Internet and use it as an essential study aid inside and outside the classroom."

Math Adds Up to $5.4 Million for Digi-Block

On October 11, **Digi-Block Inc.**, a developer of mathematics products for elementary schools, announced a $5.4 million series B round of financing to expand distribution and further product development. **Grace Capital Funds** led the round, which also included **Kohlberg, Kravis, Roberts and Co.**, **William Harris Investments**, and other individual investors.

Pearson Will Score Georgia Tests

NCS Pearson Inc., a division of **Pearson plc** that processes student assessment tests, announced on October 5 it was awarded a contract by the **Georgia Department of Education** to score the state's high school end-of-course tests using its proprietary electronic test delivery system, eMeasurement Services. The tests, given in math, English language arts, science, and social studies, will be gradually introduced electronically in 2003, with full online delivery by 2005. Earlier this year, the **Virginia Department of Education** renewed its contract with NCS Pearson for implementation of the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL) Technology Initiative.

Princeton Review Customers Will Total 1.5 Million

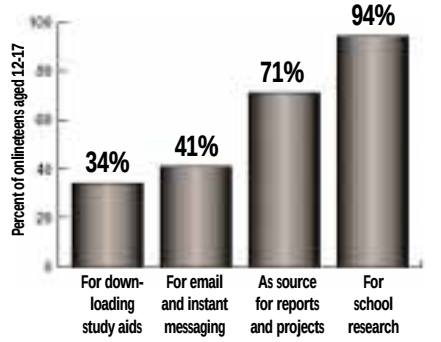
The Princeton Review Inc., a provider of classroom and online test preparation courses, tutoring, and college counseling, announced on October 2 it acquired the key operating assets of **Embark.com Inc.**, a developer of online products and services for the college admissions market. With the acquisition, The Princeton Review will now have access to more than 1.5 million students, parents, and counselors every month.

Teens and the Internet

Three out of four teens (73 percent) have access to the Internet and use it as an essential study aid inside and outside the classroom, according to a September report from the **Pew Internet & American Life Project**. The survey of 754 youths aged 12-17 found online teens saying:

- 94 percent use the Internet for school research;
- 78 percent believe the Internet helps them with schoolwork;
- 71 percent used the Internet as the major source for their most recent major school project or report;
- 41 percent use email and instant messaging to contact teachers or classmates about schoolwork; and
- 34 percent have downloaded an online study aid.

How Online Teens Use the Internet
(73% of all teens have access to the internet)



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Private Investment in Education Continues Decline

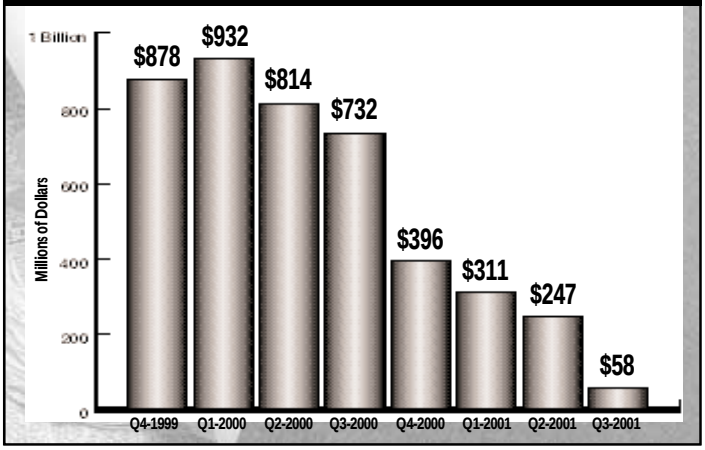
While over $900 million in private venture capital was invested in the education industry in the first quarter of 2000, venture activity declined precipitously to just $58 million in the third quarter of 2001, according to Peter Stokes of Eduventures.

While the overall trend in investment is not dissimilar to the overall pattern of venture activity across all industries, "this provides little comfort," notes Stokes in the October 1 issue of *The Education Economy*.

"If private investment trends continue apace, by the end of the fourth quarter of this year, education entrepreneurs will be handing out cash to [venture capitalists]," he observed wryly.

Stokes points out that investments devoted to education-related deals show a persistent decline as a share of total industry investments. In the first three quarters of 1999, the $1.7 billion in education investments accounted for 8 percent of the $21.6 billion industry total. By the first three quarters of 2000, that share was down to 3 percent; by the first three quarters of 2001, it was down to only 2 percent; and in the third quarter of 2001, the $58 million accounted for less than 1 percent of the $6.7 billion total.

Private Investment in the Education Industry



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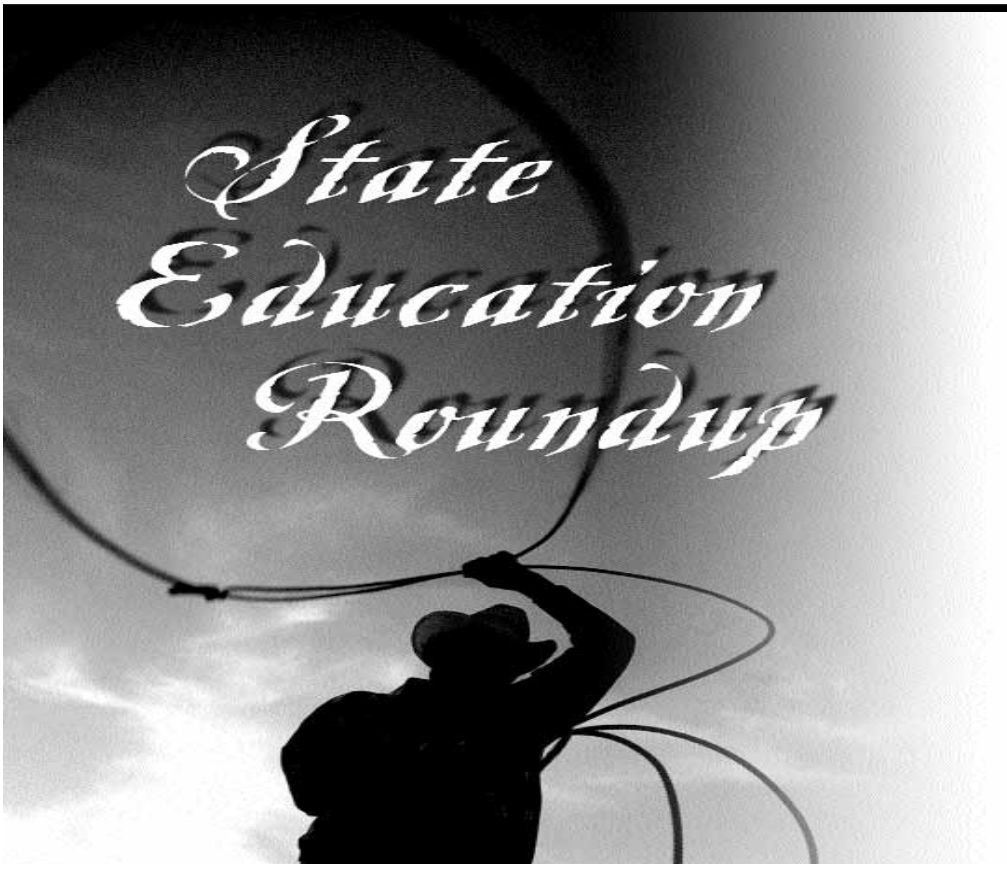

Colorado

Teacher Unions Challenge Paycheck Protection

The Colorado Federation of Public Employees and the Colorado Federation of Teachers—both affiliates of the American Federation of Teachers—have filed for an injunction in district court to block implementation of the new state payroll protection policy. The policy eliminated all employee-requested automatic payroll deductions except for charitable donations to the Colorado Combined Campaign. GOP Gov. Bill Owens established the policy through an executive order.

Education Intelligence Agency Communiqué
October 1, 2001

Connecticut

Public Schools Won't Take Everyone

Reporter Mydria Alexis Clark of the *Hartford Courant* discovered that some Connecticut school districts are having problems with out-of-town students attending schools without paying their tuition.

"Most people don't associate public education with tuition," Clark wrote, "but school districts have offered the option for years. Many of those who take advantage of the choice fear their children are not getting a good education in urban school districts. Those who pay, however, are greatly outnumbered by parents who illegally send their children to other districts. These parents also want better learning environments for their children, but they can't afford or won't pay tuition."

A 1999 *New York Times* story about public schools and out-of-town students reported public schools turning some students away, charging others tuition, and cherry-picking—or "creaming"—the best.

"Generally, tuition-paying students are admitted only in classes where there are vacancies," reporter Joseph Berger wrote. "Most districts screen out students with academic or behavioral problems."

Education Intelligence Agency Communiqué
August 27, 2001

Hawaii

Superintendent Resigns as Contract Probe Continues

The Hawaii Board of Education accepted the resignation of state Schools Superintendent Paul LeMahieu on October 18 in the midst of a state probe into the relationship between LeMahieu and a woman who owns a company to which he granted a special education contract.

LeMahieu took the job just over three years ago and initially won plaudits for his work. But last year, board members became critical of his efforts.

A House-Senate committee is investigating why LeMahieu last year granted a contract involving the award of $612,000 to Na Laukoa, a company owned by Kaniu Kinimaka-Stocksdale, despite concerns raised by Department of Education staff about the company's ability to do the job. Na Laukoa was retained to provide "technical assistance coordinators" to 15 school districts attempting to comply with a federal consent decree regarding special education services.

The contract was not subject to the usual oversight, since LeMahieu granted it using extraordinary powers given to him by the federal court. However, a witness told the committee on October 17 that the company's owner, Kinimaka-Stocksdale, had admitted to having a close relationship with LeMahieu. The committee's special counsel suggested that was the reason she got the contract.

Honolulu Advertiser
October 18-19, 2001

Illinois

Certification Credit for Class on Union Activism

When the *Chicago Tribune* ran a story describing workshops on Tai Chi, massage, and gambling being given to teachers for recertification credit, Illinois Education Association (IEA) President Anne Davis responded angrily that there were more than 40 other sessions at the conference, including "Helping Troubled and Alienated Students" and "Coping With Change."

But the *Tribune* missed an even bigger scandal among those other sessions: teacher professional development credit for union activism. Some examples:

- Having a Say in Public Policy ("Learn how to mold those policy decisions by effective lobbying and political action.")
- Dealing with the Media ("Learn to stay on message and not let reporters lead you astray.")
- K-12 Teachers and the Law ("In addition, it will describe the legal protections offered by IEA membership and the responsibility employers have to their certificated employees.")
- IEA's Strategic Vision ("Find out what the Association's future is and how it might impact members, your local, and the future of education in our state.")

Education Intelligence Agency Communiqué
August 20, 2001

Indiana

New Catholic School Donations Pass Halfway Mark

In September, fundraising efforts by the Lafayette Diocese in Noblesville, Indiana passed the halfway mark in support of the Blessed Theodore Guerin High School, the first Catholic high school to be built in the state in more than 30 years.

Designed to accommodate 800 students, the facility has a total estimated cost of $26.5 million, with about $21 million needed to begin construction. Fundraising chairman Chris Braun said donations had topped the $14 million mark, made up mostly of small individual gifts and an anonymous donation of $5 million.

"We're doing this the old-fashioned way, a pay-as-you-go philosophy," Braun told *Star* reporter Lisa Renze-Rhodes. That way, he said, the Diocese will avoid long-term debt.

The school's planned opening date is August 2003, when it will take in freshmen and sophomores. It will add a new class each year for the next two years to reach full capacity.

The Indianapolis Star
September 27, 2001

Kentucky

When Teachers Leave, Where Do They Go?

As part of a study on teacher quality issues, the Kentucky Legislative Research Commission surveyed all 173 school districts after the 1999-2000 school year to learn how many teachers left their jobs and where they went.

The results: 3,873 left their jobs—a number that represents 9.7 percent of the total number of teachers in the state. Of those who left:

- 31 percent retired;
- 25 percent took teaching jobs in other Kentucky school districts;
- 8.9 percent were dismissed (of these, only 0.3 percent were tenured);
- 4.4 percent took teaching jobs in other states;
- 4.2 percent quit for family reasons;
- 2.8 percent took disability retirement;
- 1.3 percent took jobs in the private sector;
- 0.3 percent took public sector non-teaching jobs.

The rest were either unknown or gave more than one reason for leaving.

The state plans to expand the research to include location and experience as they relate to teacher mobility.

Education Intelligence Agency Communiqué
September 10, 2001

Michigan

Board Shelves Higher Standards

Michigan's Board of Education has backtracked on a plan that would have stripped schools of accreditation if fewer than 25 percent of their students passed state-prescribed achievement tests. Speaking at an annual Governor's Education Summit, Governor

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John Engler blasted the board for showing "cowardice" in not standing behind education reform.

In response, board president Kathleen Straus said the governor should "stop bashing public education" and work to improve education.

The Friedman Report
September 2001

Minnesota

State Reins-In School District Spending

It took a week of mixed messages and confusion from the Minnesota state government before it was finally agreed that school districts could not spend or bargain away anticipated revenues from levy votes that hadn't yet occurred. This was *after* the state had passed a law saying districts could not spend money they did not have.

The Minnesota Education League was the first to discover that some districts were negotiating into teachers' contracts millions of dollars in revenues that had not been approved by the voters.

"If we think it's a bad idea for families to spend money they don't have by running up excessive credit card debt, why should it be OK for school districts to do the same thing with taxpayer dollars?" asked Minnesota Education League Executive Director Morgan Brown.

Education Intelligence Agency Communiqué
October 8, 2001

Missouri

New Free Schools Up and Running

The new St. Louis Academies opened in September with an enrollment of about 700 students. The non-religious schools, which offer free private schooling using a combination of federal grants, is becoming the model for numerous groups, including the national Church of God in Christ.

Local COGIC ministers were instrumental in the formation of the St. Louis schools. The national organization plans to establish this option for parents in urban centers around the country.

It was only in August that an alliance of ministers, financiers, and educators announced their plan to open tuition-free private schools to as many as 3,000 children this school year. This meant finding teachers and buildings and getting them ready for the start of school in just three weeks.

ABS School Services, an Arizona company, is backing the project and has loaned the Academies $4 million for start-up costs with an offer of another $16 million if necessary. Teachers will be employees of ABS and be offered health benefits. Although the pay is relatively low, with a longer school year, more than 30 teachers—both rookies and pros—enthusiastically signed on.

"You get into this business because you feel passionate about helping kids. You don't get into this to make money," social studies teacher Sean Droney told the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*.

St. Louis Post Dispatch — September 6, 2001
The Illinois Charter School Facs — October 5, 2001

New Hampshire

Bill Would Open Up Teaching Profession

Representative John R.M. Alger has introduced a bill that, if enacted, would make K-12 teaching less of a centrally controlled monopoly, thus opening the door to greater choice for prospective teachers and for schools.

HB1190 would allow a principal or local school board to hire full- or part-time teachers who do not possess state certificates, provided those candidates have a bachelor's degree and relevant experience and education. In addition to alleviating the teacher shortage and expanding local control, the measure would lessen reliance on pedagogical schooling and expand the range of teaching talents from which students can benefit.

Alger said he anticipates a hearing on the bill in January.

The Friedman Report
October 2001

Nevada

New Educational Options for Silver State Students

While tennis great Andre Agassi was winning his second-round match in the U.S. Open on August 30, the Andre Agassi College Preparatory Academy was opening its doors in his hometown of West Las Vegas.

The school enrolls 150 at-risk children in grades 3-5, with an additional class to be added each year through a high school senior class in 2008. Agassi says his goal is to lower the dropout rate by giving disadvantaged children an opportunity to enter the workforce fully prepared with a college education.

"Education is the groundwork for success, and living up to your potential may often just be a matter of what opportunities are available to us," Agassi told *USA Today*. "We're going to take the approach that we can make anything happen."

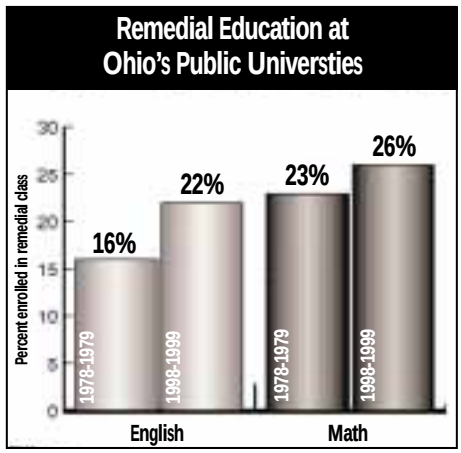
In addition to the Agassi charter school, the Clark County school district, the nation's sixth largest, has turned seven poorly performing schools over to Edison Schools, a for-profit school management company. Even with these measures, the district is having difficulty absorbing explosive growth.

"We plan, on the average, to open a school a month just to keep up," said Clark County school superintendent Carlos Garcia. "And as soon as we open them, they're already overenrolled."

The Friedman Report
September 2001

Ohio

More Ohio College Freshmen Need Remedial Ed



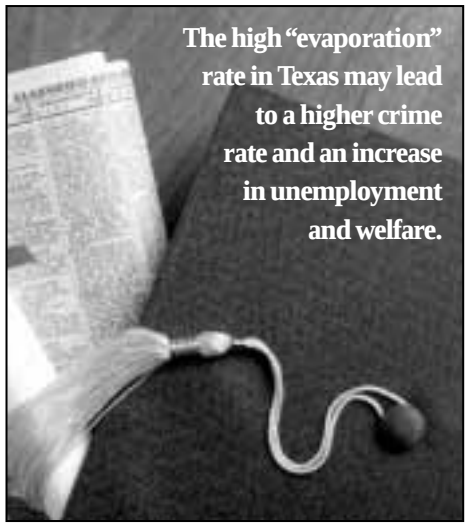
During the 1998-99 school year, 26 percent of Ohio's recent high school graduates enrolled in remedial math courses at the state's public universities, up 3 percentage points from the 1978-79 school year.

An even sharper increase was seen in enrollment of the same group of freshmen in remedial English courses—up 6 percentage points to 22 percent over the same time period.

In one analysis of the remedial education issue, researchers found that while only 43 percent of high school students nationwide were enrolled fully in college prep courses while in high school, 63 percent of high school students went on to college. The Buckeye Institute suggests Ohio's high schools could shoulder some of the responsibility for better preparing students for college by encouraging them to take a more rigorous college prep curriculum.

In Ohio, the majority of remedial courses are conducted at community colleges and branch campuses rather than at the main campuses of the state public universities. In fact, as the result of policy decisions, the number of recent high school graduates taking remedial math on main campuses has fallen by over 20 percent over the past 20 years.

The Buckeye Institute
August 2001



Texas

Students Don't Drop Out, They Just "Evaporate"

If the average statewide high school dropout rate for Texas has declined from 1.6 to 1.3 percent, as Texas Education Commissioner Jim Nelson recently proclaimed, why do only 200,000 of the 360,000 students who start ninth grade make it to tenth?

It's because most of the missing students are not classified as dropouts by the Texas Education Agency (TEA), according to Houston resident George Scott.

There are 24 different ways that a missing student may not be classed as a dropout, including transferring to another school, homeschooling, going to jail, and returning to his or her home country.

"They're not in school. But the TEA says they're not a dropout. So I call it the evaporation rate," said Scott.

He estimates that among students graduating in 1997, there was an overall attrition rate of 38 percent—meaning that 38 of 100 ninth-graders never got a high school diploma. Comparable rates for Hispanics, blacks, and whites are 49, 46, and 28 percent respectively.

The problem, Scott says, is that these huge numbers of missing students become a low priority when education officials claim the dropout rate is less than 2 percent.

"In the short run, we're saving money," said Dr. Joe Bernal, a member of the State Board of Education from San Antonio. "In the long run, we're spending a lot more as our policies result in people who end up in juvenile detention, jail, and maybe our welfare system."

Houston Press
October 18, 2001

Washington

Record Fine Doesn't Seem to Affect Union

Over the past three years, the Washington Education Association's agency fee and campaign finance bookkeeping methods have resulted in over $830,000 in fines and penalties ordered by the state.

Nonetheless, the WEA Board of Directors voted in September to spend $25,000 to oppose Initiative 747, which would limit property tax increases to 1 percent annually; another $5,000 to support Initiative 773, which would raise taxes on tobacco products to fund health care coverage; and $1,000 to support Initiative 775, which would establish an oversight authority for home health care services.

New WEA President Charles Hasse also told the board the union will take an assertive stance against the Evergreen Freedom Foundation, the conservative policy organization whose campaign against the union is mostly responsible for the fines it has paid. Hasse intimated WEA would create a new internal PR program designed specifically to counter the attacks of EFF and other organizations.

Education Intelligence Agency Communiqué
October 15, 2001

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CREDITS continued from page 1

the Cato Institute released a study showing that between 1998 and 2000, the new Arizona tax credit generated donations totaling $32 million, which funded 19,000 scholarships offered by more than 30 scholarship organizations.

The record suggests Arizona's credit "will be a net winner for Arizona taxpayers; it will extend school choice to thousands of families and save taxpayers millions of dollars," wrote the authors of the study, Carrie Lips and Jennifer Jacoby.

Parental Involvement

Senator Marsh, a leading civil rights lawyer going back to the days of Virginia's "massive resistance" to court-ordered school segregation, begged to differ after Katzen and several other speakers cited the Arizona model.

"I am rather surprised," said Marsh, who became Richmond's first black elected mayor in 1977, "that people here today are saying we should look to places like Arizona and Milwaukee for leadership. I think we have or can find the answers right here in Virginia."

Marsh suggested parental involvement is the key to a child's success and commended programs such as those seeking to make low-income parents computer-literate, which may help parents be more engaged with their children's schoolwork.

Recalling how Virginia attempted to use tuition grants as a ploy to slow down school integration in the 1960s, Marsh said many Virginians believe tax credits, charters, or vouchers will be "like the camel's nose under the tent, and once in the tent the camel will rise and the whole tent will fall."

Audience Response

Marsh failed to persuade at least one young African-American in his audience, University of Virginia graduate student Gerard Touissant Robinson.

Robinson described how he has helped organize the nation's first residential boarding charter school in New Jersey and is currently playing a key role in starting Virginia's third charter school. That charter school, specializing in math, science, and technology, will be run out of Hampton University, an historically black institution. Both schools, Robinson noted, were the products of bipartisan support.

"When there is an honest and open dialogue about race and reality," Robinson said, "people are more willing to say 'I support school choice,' or 'No I don't but I will give reasons why'" rather than relying on stale rhetoric.

An African-American leader in North Carolina's school choice movement—Vernon Robinson, a Winston-Salem alderman and founder of the North Carolina Educational Reform Fund—recalled that white liberals in the state legislature predicted the KKK and other fringe groups would be opening charter schools if the state passed enabling legislation. Instead, he pointed out, one-half of the students in North Carolina's 92 charter schools are black and one-third of charter schools have been opened in black communities.

"One thing the white liberals didn't understand," said Robinson, "was that a vote for charter schools was not a vote for white flight but a vehicle for black empowerment. The segregationists got out 40 years ago. Today it is the working class, low-income black families who want out."

Robinson said charter schools are the "only fully accountable public schools in North Carolina," in that parents can leave if they aren't satisfied and public authorities can close them if they don't deliver on their promises.

Contrasting North Carolina's 92 charter schools with Virginia's two, Robinson said if Virginia is to realize the benefit of charter schools, it will need to change its law, which allows local school boards to reject charter school applications or even refuse to entertain them.

"That's like going across the street and asking Sun Trust Bank, 'May I open a bank?'" said Robinson.

Increased Cooperation

Virginia's former State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Bill Bosher, who currently heads an education policy institute at Virginia Commonwealth University, called for increased cooperation among public, private, and home schools. But he strongly opposed vouchers or tax credits as a way to facilitate choice.

"If I never wanted to use a public library, would you give me a voucher for my AOL subscription?" Bosher asked rhetorically. "If I chose never to use a public park or recreational facility, would you pay my family fitness club membership?"

Lil Tuttle, who worked with Bosher in developing Virginia's nationally acclaimed Standards of Learning when she was an appointee of Gov. George Allen on the State Board of Education, strongly disagreed with that reasoning.

A founding board member of Children First Virginia, which raises money for private scholarships for needy children in Central Virginia, Tuttle said education has become a "two-tiered, elitist, inequitable system" that gives the "haves" an array of choices but the have-nots "no options—they must accept the seat they are assigned."

"Two years ago," Tuttle recalled, "an African-American pastor drew a convincing parallel to lessons of the last century. He pointed out that 40 years ago, children were locked out of public schools because of race. Today, some are locked into public schools because of economic circumstances. Those standing in the way were wrong then, and they are wrong today."

As far as the argument that public funds should never be used to purchase private services, Tuttle, now education director for the Clare Boothe Luce Policy Institute, asked, "Why ever not?" She pointed out that millions of public dollars pay for private college choice through the GI Bill, Pell Grants, and the Virginia Tuition Assistance Grant Program.

Public funds also support parental choice of private preschools, Tuttle noted, and "no one complains about that." Only the K-12 public school monopoly freezes out private educational choice.

Victoria Cobb, director of government relations for the Family Foundation, pointed out that in inner-city Richmond schools near where the forum was being held, more than two-thirds of third-graders have not been taught to read. These are "the exact children most in need of help" from school choice programs, she said.

Robert Holland, who also spoke at the forum, is a senior fellow at the Lexington Institute, a public policy think tank in Arlington, Virginia. His email address is rholl1176@yahoo.com.

Massachusetts and Colorado Next for Bilingual Reform

Initiatives being prepared in both states

BY DON SOIFER

As the bilingual education reform movement builds momentum around the country, activists are preparing for two major statewide ballot initiatives in 2002.

In Massachusetts and Colorado, campaigns are moving forward to replace bilingual education with new one-year English immersion programs. California was the first state to do so, in 1998, followed by Arizona in 2000.

Debate Launches Campaign

Massachusetts' English for the Children campaign got underway on October 16 with a debate at Harvard University's Graduate School of Education between bilingual reform pioneer Ron Unz and Shattuck Professor of Education Catherine Snow.

A lively, standing-room-only crowd was "openly hostile" to Unz as he presented his case. He explained that over one million immigrant children in California had improved their test scores by over 50 percent since the initiative he spearheaded eliminated bilingual education there.

Snow dismissed the rise in test scores, attributing them to smaller class sizes and increased school funding.

"We don't need California's initiatives to solve Massachusetts' educational problems," she declared.

At the time this article was written, supporters of the Massachusetts initiative had collected more than 65,000 signatures and planned to submit twice the 57,000 required before the November 21 deadline. They have also scheduled four additional debates around the state.

Massachusetts law requires schools to offer "transitional bilingual education programs" when at least 20 students in a district speak the same non-English native language. Over 45,000 English learners are currently enrolled in such programs. But state law does not stipulate the classes be transitional in anything but name: There is no requirement that they graduate a single child into mainstream classes. An October 2001 study by the Lexington Institute found transition rates were often extremely low in the programs that were examined.

"There is deep dissatisfaction with the way limited-English kids have been educated in Massachusetts over the past 30 years," said initiative co-chair Dr. Rosalie Porter. "I've seen the disappointing results of native-language programs as a classroom teacher, program director, and researcher. Now, with bilingual students required to take the statewide reading, writing, and math tests for the first time—along with all other students—we know that bilingual education has to change."

Colorado Reformers Renew Efforts

Meanwhile, organizers of the Colorado initiative are underway with a proposition of their own.

After an 11th-hour rejection on technical grounds by the Colorado Supreme Court in 2000, Centennial State reformers are now gearing up a new campaign chaired by Unz and former Denver School Board member Rita Montero.

Colorado has approximately 52,000 English learners, one-third of whom attend the Denver Public Schools. Nine out of ten are native Spanish speakers. Bilingual programs, used in one in four Colorado school districts, vary in methodology but share a common reliance on

segregated instruction in students' non-English native language.

Denver schools are operating under a federal court-approved plan to limit the amount of time students spend in bilingual classes to three years. The new policy has not been in effect long enough to judge its effectiveness, but many reformers are skeptical it is achieving its goal.

"Throughout most of the country, advocates of bilingual education falsely claim that they support a three-year limit to the program," said Unz. "But when Denver School Board Member Rita Montero and her colleagues actually tried to enact a three-year limit, they were viciously attacked as acting contrary to all the existing bilingual education research, which demands that the program last at least five to seven years.

"Now," he predicted, "Colorado's bilingual programs are headed for the trash can of history."

Don Soifer is executive vice president of the Lexington Institute. Copies of the Massachusetts study, "Federal Bilingual Education Programs in Massachusetts: 'But Do They Help the Children?'" can be obtained by emailing mail@lexingtoninstitute.org.

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PANEL: U.S. Science Education Poses Security Risk

Commission warned in 1999 of vulnerability to terrorist attack

"The scale and nature of the ongoing revolution in science and technology, and what this implies for the quality of human capital in the 21st century, pose critical national security challenges for the United States. Second only to a weapon of mass destruction detonating in an American city, we can think of nothing more dangerous than a failure to manage properly science, technology, and education for the common good over the next quarter century."

"Road Map for National Security: Imperative for Change,"
The Phase III Report of the U.S. Commission on National Security/
21st Century, February 15, 2001

BY GEORGE A. CLOWES

After examining possible U.S. responses to the prospective strategic environment of the next quarter century, the U.S. Commission on National Security/21st Century earlier this year concluded "significant changes must be made in the structures and processes of the U.S. national security apparatus."

Headed by former Senators Gary Hart and Warren B. Rudman, the advisory panel made recommendations for organizational change in five key areas, of which the top two were "ensuring the security of the American homeland" and "recapitalizing America's strengths in science and education."

On September 15, 1999, two years before the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center towers, the Pentagon-appointed panel had issued its first report on the emerging global security environment of the early 21st century and concluded the U.S. "will become increasingly vulnerable to hostile attack in our homeland" from foreign governments, terrorists, and other disaffected groups.

In a future which they believed could involve "the deliberate terrorizing of civilian populations" and "unannounced attacks on American cities," the 14-member commission warned "Americans will likely die on American soil, possibly in large numbers."

"We should expect conflicts in which adversaries, because of cultural affinities different from our own, will resort to forms and levels of violence shocking to our sensibilities," wrote the 14 commission members in their Phase I report, "New World Coming: American Security in the 21st Century."

"We believe that the same ideas that are spreading free minds and free markets in the world today are the cause of much of the tumult we witness as well," said Hart and former House Speaker Newt Gingrich at a March 21, 2001 meeting of the House Armed Services Committee. "These ideas were revolutionary when they transformed European and American politics some two and a half centuries ago, and they remain so for much of the world today."

In its most recent report, "Road Map for National Security: Imperative for Change," issued on February 15, 2001, the commission first recommends the formation of an independent National Homeland Security Agency with responsibility for planning, coordinating, and integrating various U.S. government agencies involved in homeland security. Following that, the commission makes a number of recommendations for rebuilding the country's leadership in scientific research and K-12 education.

According to the commission, "the inadequacies of our systems of research and education pose a greater threat to U.S. national security over the next quarter century than any conventional national war that we might imagine." Its report calls for substantial increases in funding for federal R&D to rebuild America's technological leadership. Also recommended is a new National Security Science and Technology Education Act to fund a comprehensive program for producing the needed numbers of science and engineering professionals as well as qualified teachers in science and math.

The Problem

The increasingly technology-driven U.S. economy is projected to add some 20 million jobs during the next decade, many of which will require significant technical expertise. But evidence is mounting that the U.S. does not do a good job of math and science education, as demonstrated, for example, by the poor showing of U.S. high school students in the Third International Math and Science Study.

In seeking technically skilled employees, a dearth of domestic candidates has forced U.S. firms to resort to importing qualified candidates from abroad, using special H-1B visas. But, as the commission warns, "large numbers of specialized foreign technicians in critical positions in the U.S. economy could pose security risks."

In 1997, the U.S. produced only 63,000 engineers, compared to China's 148,000. In that same year, North America produced 23 percent of all science and engineering degrees granted worldwide, with Europe making up 34 percent and Asia making up 43 percent. More than half or more of the science and math doctorates at U.S. colleges are taken by foreigners, who then leave the country with their knowledge, according to the report.

To produce more scientists and engineers, the Glenn Commission last year estimated that more than 240,000 new and qualified science and math teachers are needed in K-12 classrooms over the next decade. (See "Literacy and Science," *School Reform News*, December 2000.)

But qualified math and science teachers aren't attracted to K-12 education: Some 34 percent of public school math teachers and nearly 40 percent of science teachers lack an academic major in their primary teaching fields.

Making Math and Science More Attractive

The commission recommends educational incentive programs for math and science studies, but it also recognizes the need to restore the professional status of educators and attract those with science and math backgrounds into teaching. It recommends efforts to:

- Provide incentives such as loan forgiveness and scholarships to encourage students to pursue careers in science and technology, particularly as K-12 teachers;
- Provide incentives for graduates and experienced professionals in math, science, and engineering to commit to teach in America's public schools for three to five years;
- Develop flexible alternative certification pathways to encourage experienced professionals in math, science, and engineering to make lateral transfers into teaching; and
- Provide improved professional development opportunities for math and science teachers.

The commission recommends raising salaries to commercial levels for teachers, but particularly for science and math teachers so as to reduce the differential between public- and private-sector rewards. However, the commission states clearly it is not recommending that all teachers' salaries should be raised to this level.

"Given the exigencies of the market, we see no reason why science and math teachers should not earn more than other teachers even in the same school system," notes the report.

Noting that the infusion of additional resources has often produced disappointing results, the commission also calls for "new and creative approaches" to education, "including approaches that harness the power of competition."

Engineering Dropouts Lack Math Skills

Difficulty in mastering math was cited as the number one reason students drop out of engineering majors, according to a September 2000 survey of 4,700 engineering professors by MathSoft Engineering & Education Inc., authors of the MathCad and StudyWorks software programs.

In the survey, professors estimated 40 percent of the students they had taught did not receive the high school fundamentals needed for undergraduate engineering studies. In follow-up interviews, some professors were particularly critical of how computers and technology were used. For too many students, said one, "computers appear to be a substitution for learning instead of a tool."

"When we took one of the students out to lunch with us, we asked him to leave the 15 percent tip," recalled a University of Kentucky professor. "He stated he could not figure it out without a calculator."

"Since 40 percent of freshmen are placed in one or more remedial class areas, clearly the high schools need to do a better job," said a professor from the New Jersey Institute of Technology.

At its current rate of training and attracting engineers, the U.S. is unlikely to be able to produce the skilled graduates required to fill the estimated 20 million high-tech jobs projected to be created by 2008, according to the American Society for Engineering Education in the February 2001 issue of its magazine *Prism*.

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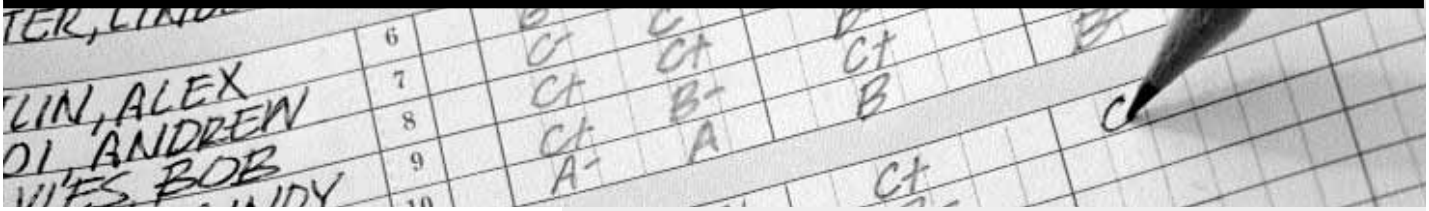
Just The Facts: Spending and Student Achievement



Inputs

Outputs

Early Estimate Data for 2000-2001: (47.2 million students, 2.95 million teachers, $384.7 billion revenue)

Per Pupil Revenue	Per Pupil Expenditure	Pupil/Teacher Ratio	State	NAEP Tests - % scoring at or above "Proficient" 8th-Grade Reading (1998)	NAEP Tests - % scoring at or above "Proficient" 8th-Grade Math (2000)	ACT Scores 2001 Composite Average	ACT Scores 2001 % of Grads Tested	SAT Scores 2001 % of Grads Tested	SAT Scores 2001 Average Verbal	SAT Scores 2001 Average Math
$8,157	$7,079	16.0	National	31%	26%	21.0	38%	45%	506	514
$6,921	$5,968	15.3	Alabama	21%	16%	20.1	69%	9%	559	554
$10,098	$9,031	16.7	Alaska	-	-	21.0	34%	51%	514	510
$6,531	$4,968	19.2	Arizona	28%	21%	21.5	28%	34%	523	525
$5,927	$5,269	15.4	Arkansas	23%	14%	20.1	75%	6%	562	550
$7,466	$6,255	20.8	California	22%	18%	21.4	12%	51%	498	517
$6,775	$6,085	17.2	Colorado	30%	-	21.5	62%	31%	539	542
$11,209	$10,135	13.2	Connecticut	42%	34%	21.8	4%	82%	509	510
$9,725	$8,752	15.3	Delaware	25%	-	20.6	4%	67%	501	499
$11,540	$10,252	15.8	D.C.	-	6%	17.4	26%	56%	482	474
$7,913	$5,982	18.2	Florida	23%	-	20.4	40%	54%	498	499
$8,218	$6,478	15.4	Georgia	25%	19%	19.9	19%	63%	491	489
$7,424	$6,391	17.1	Hawaii	19%	16%	21.7	19%	52%	486	515
$7,003	$5,386	17.7	Idaho	-	27%	21.5	59%	17%	543	542
$7,938	$7,190	15.9	Illinois	-	27%	21.6	71%	12%	576	589
$8,622	$7,754	16.6	Indiana	-	31%	21.4	20%	60%	499	501
$7,581	$6,707	14.5	Iowa	-	-	22.0	67%	5%	593	603
$7,749	$6,789	14.2	Kansas	35%	34%	21.6	78%	9%	577	580
$7,280	$6,829	15.3	Kentucky	29%	21%	20.1	72%	12%	550	550
$6,672	$5,983	14.8	Louisiana	18%	12%	19.6	80%	7%	564	562
$8,884	$7,656	12.6	Maine	42%	32%	21.4	6%	69%	506	500
$8,938	$7,773	15.9	Maryland	31%	29%	20.5	11%	65%	508	510
$9,998	$9,188	12.4	Massachusetts	36%	32%	21.9	8%	79%	511	515
$9,236	$8,045	17.9	Michigan	-	28%	21.3	69%	11%	561	572
$8,478	$8,453	15.1	Minnesota	37%	40%	22.1	66%	9%	580	589
$5,639	$5,283	16.2	Mississippi	19%	8%	18.5	89%	4%	566	551
$7,489	$6,003	14.0	Missouri	29%	22%	21.4	70%	8%	577	577
$7,250	$6,390	15.1	Montana	38%	37%	21.7	55%	23%	539	539
$8,393	$7,050	13.7	Nebraska	-	31%	21.6	74%	8%	562	568
$6,829	$5,632	19.1	Nevada	24%	20%	21.3	39%	33%	509	515
$7,949	$7,302	15.0	New Hampshire	-	-	22.3	7%	72%	520	516
$12,199	$10,787	13.3	New Jersey	-	-	20.6	4%	81%	499	513
$7,084	$6,463	15.8	New Mexico	24%	13%	19.9	64%	13%	551	542
$10,950	$9,935	13.6	New York	34%	26%	22.2	14%	77%	495	505
$7,073	$6,028	15.7	North Carolina	31%	30%	19.7	13%	65%	493	499
$7,746	$7,660	13.7	North Dakota	-	31%	21.4	80%	4%	592	599
$8,621	$6,809	16.1	Ohio	-	31%	21.4	63%	26%	534	539
$6,381	$5,943	14.9	Oklahoma	29%	19%	20.5	71%	8%	567	561
$7,774	$7,357	19.6	Oregon	33%	32%	22.6	11%	55%	526	526
$9,549	$8,321	15.8	Pennsylvania	-	-	21.4	8%	71%	500	499
$9,299	$9,515	14.0	Rhode Island	30%	24%	21.2	5%	71%	501	499
$7,662	$6,586	14.6	South Carolina	22%	18%	19.3	28%	57%	486	488
$7,042	$6,115	13.8	South Dakota	-	-	21.4	70%	4%	577	582
$6,217	$5,733	15.9	Tennessee	26%	17%	20.0	79%	13%	562	553
$7,057	$6,384	14.7	Texas	28%	24%	20.3	33%	53%	493	499
$5,654	$4,372	22.1	Utah	31%	26%	21.4	69%	5%	575	570
$9,769	$8,527	11.9	Vermont	-	32%	22.2	9%	69%	511	506
$8,109	$6,750	13.8	Virginia	33%	26%	20.6	10%	68%	510	501
$7,882	$6,496	19.7	Washington	32%	-	22.4	17%	53%	527	527
$7,892	$7,565	14.0	West Virginia	27%	18%	20.2	61%	18%	527	512
$9,266	$8,363	14.3	Wisconsin	33%	-	22.2	68%	6%	584	596
$8,710	$7,928	13.0	Wyoming	29%	25%	21.5	64%	11%	547	545

Sources:

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